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Commission on the Status of Women

Report on the fiftieth session (22 March 2005, 27 February-10 March and 16 March 2006)

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Note

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of capital letters combined with figures.

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Chapter I

Matters calling for action by the Economic and Social Council or brought to its attention

A. High-level panel discussion on the gender dimensions of international migration

Summary submitted by the Chairperson of the Commission

1. The following summary, submitted by the Chairperson of the Commission, is brought to the attention of the Council for transmittal to the General Assembly at its high-level dialogue on international migration and development, to be held in New York on 14 and 15 September 2006:

High-level panel discussion on the gender dimensions of international migration*

1. At its 9th meeting, on 2 March 2006, the Commission on the Status of Women held a high-level panel discussion on the theme "The gender dimensions of international migration". The panellists were Monica Boyd, Canada Research Chair in Sociology, University of Toronto; Manuel Orozco, Senior Associate, Inter-American Dialogue, United States of America; Ndioro Ndiaye, Deputy Director-General, International Organization for Migration, Geneva; Maruja Milagros B. Asis, Director of Research and Publications, Scalabrini Migration Centre, Philippines; and Irena Omelaniuk, Migration Adviser, World Bank. The panel was moderated by Carmen Maria Gallardo (El Salvador), Chairperson of the Commission.

2. The high-level panel discussion provided the opportunity for the Commission to examine the multidimensional aspects of international migration from a gender perspective and to provide input to the General Assembly at its High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, to be held in New York on 14 and 15 September 2006.

3. Women were active participants in migration within and between countries. Statistics indicated, for example, that the proportion of women among international migrants had reached 51 per cent in more developed regions. Women moved on their own as the principal wage earners or for family reunification purposes. Most women moved voluntarily, but women and girls were also forced to migrate owing to conflict and violence. There was increasing recognition that gender biases existed in the migration process, resulting in women's experiences being different from those of men, including in relation to exit and entry and in countries of destination. Causes and outcomes of migration could be very different for women and for men.

4. The linkages between migration and development were identified as critical. A holistic and comprehensive approach was required to address the multidimensional aspects of international migration. Poverty and lack of access to economic resources were identified as main factors influencing the propensity of women to migrate. Increased socio-economic development, including through investments in the health sector, might lead to disincentives

* For the discussion, see chap. II, paras. 41-46.

for migration. Increased gender equality within countries of origin might also reduce women's need for and interest in migration, including for economic reasons. Perceptions about the roles of women and men, relationships within households and resource allocations determined the ability of women to make migration decisions autonomously, to contribute to decision-making on migration within the household and to access resources for migration.

5. Insufficient information was available on the impact of migration of both women and men on the families remaining in the countries of origin. A closer examination of the structural conditions, including underdevelopment and poverty, that led people to migrate and leave their families behind was needed. The importance of national policies in ensuring the welfare of those left behind was noted, and it was recommended that the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development give attention to that issue.

6. The empowerment of women in the migration process required the increased participation of women in migration decisions. The empowerment of migrant women should be given specific attention in migration policies and legislation. The need for countries of origin and destination to examine their exit and entry policies to determine the impact on women was noted, as well as the need for greater collaboration between ministries to ensure increased attention to gender equality and the linkages between gender equality, migration and development.

7. It was recognized that the migration of women and men was linked to specific demand for different types of labour. In some countries, the demand for labour in traditionally male-dominated jobs, for example, in construction, led to high levels of male migration. In other countries, the demand for care workers led to increased labour migration of women. Participants noted, however, that the care sector was often a precarious and unprotected sector.

8. Agreements between countries of origin and countries of destination to encourage and facilitate migration were generally economically driven. Gender equality issues were often not given attention in such agreements, which could result in negative impacts on women. The issue of "brain drain" was raised, and it was pointed out that some developing countries had experienced a huge migration of professionals, including women, to developed countries to earn higher incomes.

9. The living and working conditions of both legal and undocumented migrant women workers should be examined further, including to identify their mistreatment and abuse. Violence against women migrants was cited as a critical issue. The issue of racial discrimination, xenophobia and other forms of discrimination were also raised by some participants. Gender-sensitive rights-based approaches to migration should include promotion and protection of the rights of migrant women workers, through, for example, the development of an enabling international environment, the ratification and implementation of international legal instruments, including the labour standards of the International Labour Organization and the harmonization of national legislation. Legal frameworks should meet the needs of both States and migrants. Partnerships with trade unions and training for police and border officials were recommended. The key role of non-governmental organizations in promoting the rights of migrant women was highlighted.

10. In some countries, evidence suggested that men migrants remitted more than women because their earnings were higher. In other cases, however, women tended to remit more because the ratio of migrant women to men was higher. Women tended to be the main receivers of remittances and generally invested in education and health care for their children. Both senders and recipients of remittances faced major constraints in having access to financial institutions. Banks and other financial institutions should improve their services. Further research on gender and remittances was needed.

11. Countries of origin and countries of destination both shared responsibility for the welfare of migrant women. The need for awareness-raising on the contributions of women migrants in destination countries was highlighted. The contributions, while significant, often remained invisible because of the concentration of female migrant workers in the private sphere. The importance of fostering greater sensitivity to the diversity of cultures among migrants was also raised.

12. Attention was drawn to the need to address the social challenges related to migration in countries of destination and the need to link the social and economic aspects of migration. Migrant women themselves could play a key role in addressing social challenges. The important contribution of diaspora communities in providing support to migrant women, including in relation to integration into destination countries, was highlighted. Migrant associations and migrant non-governmental organizations could play an important role in addressing the challenges of migration.

13. Trafficking was recognized as a development issue that cut across the Millennium Development Goals, particularly the goals on poverty eradication and gender equality and the empowerment of women. The majority of trafficked women came from low-income, socially deprived circumstances, mostly in developing countries and countries with economies in transition. In countries without comprehensive social security systems, women became vulnerable to trafficking and often ended up in unregulated labour sectors.

14. The forced absence of women through trafficking led to the breakdown of families, the neglect of children and the elderly, and negative impacts on health and education. Trafficking could force children into work, denying them education and reinforcing the illiteracy and poverty cycles that hindered development efforts. It could have a negative impact on public health services, including upon the return of victims of trafficking. It was noted that such impacts of trafficking had been researched inadequately and indicators to measure effectively the impacts on families were lacking.

15. It was recommended that organizations focusing on migration, including the International Organization for Migration, investigate the causes of trafficking and develop comprehensive indicators for cross-country analyses. Models for assessing trafficking flows, identifying early warning signals and assessing the impact of trafficking on countries of origin, including costs to public health systems, were needed. Evaluations of counter-trafficking programmes should include analyses of labour market factors and the role of recruiters. The need for effective legal measures to address trafficking in women and girls, as well as for cross-border collaboration, including on monitoring and prosecution, was also highlighted.

B. Draft resolutions for adoption by the Council

2. The Commission on the Status of Women recommends to the Economic and Social Council the adoption of the following draft resolutions:

Draft resolution I
Situation of women and girls in Afghanistan*

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling General Assembly resolutions 60/32 A and B of 30 November 2005, on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security and emergency international assistance for peace, normalcy and reconstruction of war-stricken Afghanistan, in particular the references to the situation of women and girls,

Recalling also Security Council resolutions 1589 (2005) of 24 March 2005 and 1659 (2006) of 15 February 2006, on the situation in Afghanistan, and 1325 (2000) of 31 October 2000, on women and peace and security,

Recalling further its resolution 2005/8 of 21 July 2005, on the situation of women and girls in Afghanistan,

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the report of the Secretary-General on the situation of women and girls in Afghanistan;[1]

2. *Welcomes* the references to the situation of women and girls in General Assembly resolutions 60/32 A and B of 30 November 2005;

3. *Invites* the Secretary-General to take into account a gender perspective when preparing the reports requested by the General Assembly in its resolutions 60/32 A and B and to include a specific and substantive section focusing on the situation of women and girls in Afghanistan in those reports;

4. *Requests* the Secretary-General to transmit those reports to the Commission on the Status of Women at its fifty-first session.

Draft resolution II
Situation of and assistance to Palestinian women**

The Economic and Social Council,

Having considered with appreciation the report of the Secretary-General on the situation of and assistance to Palestinian women,[2]

Recalling the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women,[3] in particular paragraph 260 concerning Palestinian women and children,

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* For the discussion, see chap. II, paras. 59-64.

** For the discussion, see chap. II, paras. 65-71.

[1] E/CN.6/2006/5.

[2] E/CN.6/2006/4.

[3] *Report of the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, Nairobi, 15-26 July 1985* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.85.IV.10), chap. I, sect. A.

the Beijing Platform for Action[4] adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women, and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century",[5]

Recalling also its resolution 2005/43 of 26 July 2005 and other relevant United Nations resolutions,

Recalling further the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women[6] as it concerns the protection of civilian populations,

Recalling the importance of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 57/337 of 3 July 2003, on the prevention of armed conflict, and Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) of 31 October 2000, on women and peace and security,

Expressing the urgent need for the full resumption of negotiations within the Middle East peace process on its agreed basis and towards the speedy achievement of a final settlement between the Palestinian and Israeli sides,

Concerned about the grave situation of Palestinian women in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, resulting from the severe impact of ongoing illegal Israeli settlement activities and the unlawful construction of the wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, as well as the severe consequences arising from Israeli military operations on and sieges of civilian areas, which have impacted detrimentally their social and economic conditions and deepened the humanitarian crisis faced by them and their families,

Welcoming the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights[7] on the issue of Palestinian pregnant women giving birth at Israeli checkpoints owing to denial of access by Israel to hospitals, with a view to ending this Israeli practice,

Recalling the advisory opinion rendered on 9 July 2004 by the International Court of Justice on the *Legal consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory*[8] and recalling also General Assembly resolution ES-10/15 of 20 July 2004,

Recalling also the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,[9] the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights[9] and the Convention on the Rights of the Child,[10] and affirming that these human rights instruments must be respected in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Expressing its condemnation of all acts of violence, including all acts of terror, provocation, incitement and destruction, especially the excessive use of force

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[4] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

[5] See General Assembly resolutions S-23/2 and S-23/3.

[6] See General Assembly resolution 48/104.

[7] A/60/324.

[8] See A/ES-10/273 and Corr.1.

[9] General Assembly resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

[10] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

against Palestinian civilians, many of them women and children, resulting in injury and loss of human life,

1. *Calls upon* the concerned parties, as well as the international community, to exert all the necessary efforts to ensure the full resumption of the peace process on its agreed basis, taking into account the common ground already gained, and calls for measures for tangible improvement of the difficult situation on the ground and the living conditions faced by Palestinian women and their families;

2. *Reaffirms* that the Israeli occupation remains a major obstacle for Palestinian women with regard to their advancement, self-reliance and integration in the development planning of their society;

3. *Demands* that Israel, the occupying Power, comply fully with the provisions and principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,[11] the Regulations annexed to The Hague Convention IV of 18 October 1907[12] and the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 12 August 1949,[13] in order to protect the rights of Palestinian women and their families;

4. *Calls upon* Israel to facilitate the return of all refugees and displaced Palestinian women and children to their homes and properties, in compliance with the relevant United Nations resolutions;

5. *Also calls upon* the international community to continue to provide urgently needed assistance and services in an effort to alleviate the dire humanitarian crisis being faced by Palestinian women and their families and to help in the reconstruction of relevant Palestinian institutions;

6. *Requests* the Commission on the Status of Women to continue to monitor and take action with regard to the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women,[3] in particular paragraph 260 concerning Palestinian women and children, the Beijing Platform for Action[4] and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century";[5]

7. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to review the situation, to assist Palestinian women by all available means, including those laid out in the report of the Secretary-General on the situation of and assistance to Palestinian women[2] and to submit to the Commission on the Status of Women at its fifty-first session a report, including information provided by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, on the progress made in the implementation of the present resolution.

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[11] General Assembly resolution 217 A (III).

[12] See Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, *The Hague Conventions and Declarations of 1899 and 1907* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1915).

[13] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, No. 973.

Draft resolution III
Future organization and methods of work of the Commission on the Status of Women*

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling its resolution 2005/48 of 27 July 2005, in which the Council welcomed the progress made in the review of the working methods of several functional commissions, and invited those functional commissions, and other relevant subsidiary bodies that had not yet done so to continue to examine their methods of work, as mandated by the General Assembly in its resolution 57/270 B of 23 June 2003, in order better to pursue the implementation of the outcomes of major United Nations conferences and summits, and to submit their reports to the Council in 2006,

Reaffirming the primary responsibility of the Commission on the Status of Women for the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly,[5]

Recognizing that the organization of work of the Commission should contribute to advancing the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action[14] and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly,

Recognizing also that the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly and the fulfilment of the obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women[15] are mutually reinforcing in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women,

Reaffirming that gender mainstreaming constitutes a critical strategy in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, and underlining the catalytic role of the Commission in promoting gender mainstreaming,

Recognizing the importance of non-governmental organizations, as well as other civil society actors, in advancing the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and, in this respect, the work of the Commission,

A. Methods of work of the Commission on the Status of Women

1. *Decides* that, from its fifty-first session, the Commission on the Status of Women will consider one priority theme at each session, based on the Beijing Platform for Action[4] and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly;[5]

2. *Also decides* that the Commission will continue to hold, on an annual basis, a general discussion on the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled

* For the discussion, see chap. II, paras. 78-81.

[14] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

[15] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.

"Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century", and recommends that statements identify goals attained, achievements, gaps and challenges in relation to the implementation of previous commitments made with regard to the priority theme;

3. *Further decides* that the annual interactive high-level round table will focus on experiences, lessons learned and good practices, including results with supporting data, where available, in relation to the implementation of previous commitments made with regard to the priority theme;

4. *Decides* that each year the Commission will discuss ways and means to accelerate implementation of the previous commitments made with regard to the priority theme through:

(a) An interactive expert panel to identify key policy initiatives in order to accelerate their implementation;

(b) An interactive expert panel on capacity-building on gender mainstreaming in relation to the priority theme, based on an exchange of national and regional experiences, lessons learned and good practices, including results with supporting data, where available, with the participation of technical experts and statisticians;

5. *Also decides* that there will be one outcome to the annual discussions on the priority theme, in the form of agreed conclusions, negotiated by all States, which shall both identify gaps and challenges in the implementation of previous commitments and make action-oriented recommendations for all States, relevant intergovernmental bodies, mechanisms and entities of the United Nations system and other relevant stakeholders, in order to accelerate their implementation, and which would be widely disseminated to the United Nations system, where relevant, and made widely available by all States to the public in their own countries, as appropriate;

6. *Further decides* that each year the Commission will evaluate progress in the implementation of the agreed conclusions on a priority theme from a previous session through an interactive dialogue among all States and observers to identify means to accelerate their implementation, focusing on national and regional activities in support of the implementation of the agreed conclusions, including, where appropriate, supported by reliable statistics, sex-disaggregated data and other quantitative and qualitative information to illustrate monitoring and reporting;

7. *Decides* that the outcome of this evaluation will be in the form of a summary submitted by the Chairperson of the Commission, prepared in consultation with the regional groups, through the members of the Bureau;

8. *Also decides* that the Commission will continue to discuss emerging issues, trends and new approaches to issues affecting the situation of women or equality between women and men that require urgent consideration;

9. *Requests* the Bureau of the Commission, prior to each session, to identify, in consultation with all States, through their regional groups, an emerging issue for consideration by the Commission, taking into account developments at the global and regional levels as well as planned activities within the United Nations, where increased attention to gender perspectives is required;

10. *Decides* that the emerging issue will be addressed by an interactive expert panel focusing on achievements, gaps and challenges through an exchange of national and regional experiences, lessons learned and good practices, including results with supporting data, where available, and that the outcome of this discussion will be in the form of a summary submitted by the Chairperson of the Commission, prepared in consultation with the regional groups, through the members of the Bureau;

11. *Requests* that, from the fifty-first session of the Commission, the Division for the Advancement of Women will organize a panel event in the margins of each annual session to enable a preliminary discussion on the priority theme of the subsequent session;

12. *Invites* all gender-specific United Nations entities and other relevant United Nations entities, including the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, to contribute, where appropriate, to the discussion on the priority theme of the Commission;

13. *Decides*, in view of the traditional importance of non-governmental organizations in the advancement of women, that, in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolutions 1996/6 of 22 July 1996 and 1996/31 of 25 July 1996, such organizations should be encouraged to participate, to the maximum extent possible, in the work of the Commission and in the monitoring and implementation process related to the Fourth World Conference on Women, and requests the Secretary-General to make appropriate arrangements to ensure full utilization of existing channels of communication with non-governmental organizations in order to facilitate broad-based participation and dissemination of information;

14. *Notes with appreciation* the continuation of the annual parliamentary meetings organized by the Inter-Parliamentary Union, as well as the programme of side events held on the occasion of the sessions of the Commission;

15. *Invites* the regional commissions to continue to contribute to the work of the Commission;

16. *Encourages* all States to consider including technical experts and statisticians, including from ministries with expertise relevant to the themes under consideration, as well as representatives of non-governmental organizations and other civil society actors, as appropriate, on their delegations to the Commission;

17. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the Commission, on an annual basis, a report on the priority theme including proposals for possible indicators, elaborated in cooperation with the Statistical Commission, to measure progress in implementation with regard to the priority theme;

18. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the Commission, on an annual basis, a report on progress in mainstreaming a gender perspective in the development, implementation and evaluation of national policies and programmes, with a particular focus on the priority theme;

19. *Further requests* the Secretary-General to include in the annual report to the General Assembly on measures taken and progress achieved in the follow-up to the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly and the annual report to the Economic and Social Council on the review and appraisal of the

system-wide implementation of Economic and Social Council agreed conclusions 1997/2 on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system an assessment of the impact of the Commission's input to discussions within the United Nations system;

20. *Welcomes* the continuation of the biennial consideration by the Commission of the proposed programme of work of the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and the Division for the Advancement of Women;

21. *Decides* that the Commission, at its fifty-third session, should review the functioning of its revised methods of work, in the light of the outcome of the discussions on strengthening of the Economic and Social Council, in order to ensure the effective functioning of the Commission;

22. *Also decides* that, at its fifty-third session, the Commission will discuss the possibility of conducting in 2010 a review and appraisal of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly;

B. Themes for the period 2007-2009

23. *Further decides* that:

(a) In 2007, the priority theme will be "The elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child", and progress will be evaluated in the implementation of the agreed conclusions from the forty-eighth session of the Commission on "The role of men and boys in achieving gender equality";

(b) In 2008, the priority theme will be "Financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women", and progress will be evaluated in the implementation of the agreed conclusions from the forty-eighth session of the Commission on "Women's equal participation in conflict prevention, management and conflict resolution and in post-conflict peacebuilding";

(c) In 2009, the priority theme will be "The equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including caregiving in the context of HIV/AIDS", and progress will be evaluated in the implementation of the agreed conclusions from the fiftieth session of the Commission on "The equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes at all levels".

C. Draft decision for adoption by the Council

3. The Commission on the Status of Women also recommends to the Economic and Social Council the adoption of the following draft decision:

Draft decision

Report of the Commission on the Status of Women on its fiftieth session and provisional agenda and documentation for the fifty-first session of the Commission*

The Economic and Social Council takes note of the report of the Commission on the Status of Women on its fiftieth session and approves the provisional agenda and documentation for the fifty-first session of the Commission set out below:

1. Election of officers.

2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.

Documentation

Annotated provisional agenda and proposed organization of work

3. Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century":

(a) Implementation of strategic objectives and action in critical areas of concern, and further actions and initiatives;

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General on elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl-child

(b) Emerging issues, trends and new approaches to issues affecting the situation of women or equality between women and men;

(c) Gender mainstreaming, situations and programmatic matters.

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General on progress in mainstreaming a gender perspective in the development, implementation and evaluation of national policies and programmes, with a particular focus on the priority theme

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation of and assistance to Palestinian women

Report of the joint workplan of the Division for the Advancement of Women and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the United Nations Development Fund for Women on the activities of the Fund to eliminate violence against women

Note by the Secretariat transmitting the results of the thirty-seventh session of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

Note by the Secretariat on the proposed programme of work of the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and the Division for the Advancement of Women for the biennium 2008-

* For the discussion, see chap. V.

2009

4. Communications concerning the status of women.

Documentation

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the list of confidential communications concerning the status of women

5. Follow-up to Economic and Social Council resolutions and decisions.

Documentation

Letter from the President of the Economic and Social Council addressed to the Chairperson of the Commission on the Status of Women

Note by the Secretariat as input to the high-level segment of the substantive session of 2007 of the Economic and Social Council

6. Provisional agenda for the fifty-second session of the Commission.

7. Adoption of the report of the Commission on its fifty-first session.

D. Matters brought to the attention of the Council

4. The following resolutions, decisions and agreed conclusions adopted by the Commission are brought to the attention of the Council:

Resolution 50/1
Release of women and children taken hostage, including those subsequently imprisoned, in armed conflicts*

The Commission on the Status of Women,

Recalling all its previous resolutions on the release of women and children taken hostage, including those subsequently imprisoned, in armed conflicts, as well as all resolutions of the Commission on Human Rights concerning hostage-taking and General Assembly resolution 57/220 of 18 December 2002,

Recalling also the relevant provisions contained in the instruments of international humanitarian law relative to the protection of the civilian population as such,

Taking into account the International Convention against the Taking of Hostages, adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 34/146 of 17 December 1979, which recognizes that everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person and that the taking of hostages is an offence of grave concern to the international community,

Reaffirming the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action,[14] as well as the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century",[16] and the outcome document of the special session of the Assembly on

* For the discussion, see chap. II, paras. 47-51.

[16] General Assembly resolutions S-23/2, annex, and S-23/3, annex.

children entitled "A world fit for children"[17] including the provisions therein regarding violence against women and children, and welcoming the ten-year review and appraisal of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action at the forty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 57/337 of 3 July 2003 on prevention of armed conflict, Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) of 31 October 2000 on women, peace and security, as well as its resolutions 1539 (2004) of 22 April 2004 and 1612 (2005) of 26 July 2005 on children and armed conflict,

Expressing grave concern at the continuation of armed conflicts in many regions throughout the world and the human suffering and humanitarian emergencies they have caused,

Emphasizing that all forms of violence in areas of armed conflict committed against the civilian population as such, including taking women and children hostage, seriously contravene international humanitarian law, in particular as set out in the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949,[18]

Concerned that, despite the efforts of the international community, acts of hostage-taking in different forms and manifestations, inter alia, those committed by terrorists and armed groups, continue to take place and have even increased in many regions of the world,

Recognizing that hostage-taking calls for resolute, firm and concerted efforts on the part of the international community, in conformity with international humanitarian law and in accordance with international human rights standards, in order to bring such abhorrent practices to an end,

Expressing its strong belief that the rapid and unconditional release of women and children taken hostage in areas of armed conflict will promote the implementation of the noble goals enshrined in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome documents of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, as well as the outcome document of the special session of the Assembly on children, entitled "A world fit for children", including the provisions therein regarding violence against women and children,

1. *Reaffirms* that hostage-taking, wherever and by whomever committed, is an illegal act aimed at the destruction of human rights and is, under any circumstances, unjustifiable, including as a means to promote and protect human rights;

2. *Condemns* all violent acts committed against the civilian population as such, in violation of the international humanitarian law in situations of armed conflict, and calls for an effective response to such acts, in particular the immediate release of women and children taken hostage, including those subsequently imprisoned, in armed conflicts, including by strengthening international cooperation in this field;

3. *Also condemns* the consequences of hostage-taking, in particular torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, murder, rape, slavery, and trafficking in women and children;

[17] General Assembly resolution S-27/2, annex.

[18] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, Nos. 970-973.

4. *Strongly urges* all parties to armed conflicts to respect fully the norms of international humanitarian law in armed conflict and to take all necessary measures for the protection of the civilian population as such, and to release immediately all women and children who have been taken hostage;

5. *Urges* all parties to armed conflicts to provide safe, unimpeded access to humanitarian assistance for those women and children, in accordance with international humanitarian law;

6. *Stresses* both the need to put an end to impunity and the responsibility of all States to prosecute in accordance with international law those responsible for war crimes, including hostage-taking;

7. *Emphasizes* the importance of objective, responsible and impartial information, including sex-disaggregated data, on hostages, verifiable by relevant international organizations, in facilitating their release, and calls for assistance to these organizations in this regard;

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to ensure, within the context of the present resolution, the widest possible dissemination of relevant material, in particular material relating to Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), within existing resources;

9. *Also requests* the Secretary-General and all relevant international organizations to use their capabilities and undertake efforts to facilitate the immediate release of civilian women and children who have been taken hostage;

10. *Invites* the special rapporteurs with relevant mandates, as well as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict, to continue to address the issue of women and children taken hostage, including those subsequently imprisoned, in armed conflicts and its consequences;

11. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the Commission on the Status of Women at its fifty-second session a report on the implementation of the present resolution, including relevant recommendations, taking into account the information provided by States and relevant international organizations;

12. *Decides* to consider the question at its fifty-second session.

Resolution 50/2
Women, the girl child and HIV/AIDS*

The Commission on the Status of Women,

Reaffirming the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action,[14] the outcome documents of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly,[16] the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development,[19] the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS,[20] adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-sixth special session in 2001, the HIV/AIDS-related goals contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration of 2000[21] and the

* For the discussion, see chap. II, paras. 52-58.

[19] *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5-13 September 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[20] General Assembly resolution S-26/2, annex.

[21] General Assembly resolution 55/2.

Millennium Development Goals, in particular the aim of Member States to have halted, by 2015, and begun to reverse, the spread of HIV/AIDS,

Recalling the commitment from the 2005 World Summit of developing and implementing a package for HIV prevention, treatment and care, with the aim of coming as close as possible to the goal of universal access to treatment by 2010 for all those who need it,

Recalling also all previous resolutions on this subject,

Acknowledging that prevention, care, support and treatment for those infected and affected by HIV/AIDS are mutually reinforcing elements of an effective response that must be integrated into a comprehensive approach to combat the epidemic,

Taking note of the Guidelines on HIV/AIDS and Human Rights, as adopted by the Second International Consultation on HIV/AIDS and Human Rights, annexed to the report of the Secretary-General,[22]

Recognizing the need to ensure the respect, protection and fulfilment of human rights in the context of HIV/AIDS,

Recognizing also that populations destabilized by armed conflict, humanitarian emergencies and natural disasters, including refugees, internally displaced persons and, in particular, women and children, are at an increased risk of exposure to HIV infection,

Deeply concerned that the global HIV/AIDS pandemic affects disproportionately women and girls and that the majority of new HIV infections occur among young people,

Concerned that the vulnerability of women, girls and adolescents to HIV/AIDS is increased by their unequal legal, economic and social status, including poverty as well as other cultural and physiological factors, violence against women and girls and adolescents, early marriage, forced marriage, premature and early sexual relations, commercial sexual exploitation and female genital mutilation,

Concerned also that HIV infection rates are at least twice as high among young people, especially young and married women, who do not finish primary school as among those who do,

Concerned further that women and girls have different and unequal access to the use of health resources for the prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS,

1. *Stresses with deep concern* that the HIV/AIDS pandemic, with its devastating scale and impact on women and girls, requires urgent action in all fields and at all levels;

2. *Also stresses* that gender equality and the political, social and economic empowerment of women and girls are fundamental elements in the reduction of their vulnerability to HIV/AIDS and are essential to reversing the pandemic;

3. *Expresses its concern* that the HIV/AIDS pandemic reinforces gender inequalities, that women and girls bear a disproportionate share of the burden imposed by the HIV/AIDS crisis, that they are more easily infected, that they bear

[22] E/CN.4/1997/37.

the disproportionate burden to care for and support those infected and affected by the disease and that they become more vulnerable to poverty as a result of the HIV/AIDS crisis;

4. *Reaffirms* the need for Governments, supported by the relevant actors, including civil society, to intensify national efforts and international cooperation in the implementation of the commitments contained in the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS,[20] the Beijing Platform for Action[4] and the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development,[19] and to work towards reflecting effectively in their national policies, strategies and budgets the gender dimension of the pandemic, in line with the time-bound goals of the Declaration and the Platform for Action;

5. *Reaffirms also* the commitment to achieving universal access to reproductive health care by 2015, as set out in the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, integrating this goal into strategies to attain internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration[21] aimed at reducing maternal mortality, improving maternal health, reducing child mortality, promoting gender equality, combating HIV/AIDS and eradicating poverty;

6. *Urges* Governments to take all necessary measures to create an enabling environment for the empowerment of women, to strengthen their economic independence and to protect and promote their full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, in order to enable them to protect themselves from HIV infection;

7. *Urges* Governments and other relevant stakeholders to address the challenges faced by older women caring for people living with or affected by HIV/AIDS, including orphaned grandchildren;

8. *Emphasizes* the need to strengthen policy and programme linkages and coordination between HIV/AIDS and sexual and reproductive health and their inclusion in national development plans, including poverty reduction strategies and sector-wide approaches where they exist, as a necessary strategy for fighting the HIV/AIDS pandemic and mitigating its impact on the population, which could result in more relevant and cost-effective interventions with greater impact;

9. *Urges* Governments to strengthen initiatives that would increase the capacities of women and adolescent girls to protect themselves from the risk of HIV infection, principally through the provision of health care and health services, including for sexual and reproductive health, in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and that integrate HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment and care and include voluntary counselling and testing, and through prevention education that promotes gender equality within a culturally and gender-sensitive framework;

10. *Also urges* Governments to ensure accessible and affordable procurement of prevention commodities, in particular microbicides and male and female condoms, to ensure that their supply is adequate and secure;

11. *Reminds* States to consider that flexibilities in trade-related intellectual property rights can be used by States when necessary to protect public health and address public health crises;

12. *Urges* Governments, where they have not yet done so, to institute and ensure the enforcement of laws to protect women and girls from early and forced marriage and marital rape;

13. *Also urges* Governments to expand access to treatment, in a progressive and sustainable manner, including the prevention and treatment of opportunistic diseases and effective use of antiretroviral medication and to promote access to low-cost effective drugs and related pharmaceutical products, in particular for women and girls;

14. *Further urges* Governments to ensure that women and girls have equitable and sustained access to treatment for HIV/AIDS and opportunistic infections, appropriate to their age, health and nutritional status, with the full protection of their human rights, including their reproductive rights and sexual health, in accordance with, inter alia, the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and other relevant international human rights instruments, and to protection from coerced sexual activity, and to monitor access to treatment by age, sex, marital status and continuity of care;

15. *Requests* Governments to ensure the provision of equal access for women and men throughout their life cycle to social services related to health care, including education, clean water and safe sanitation, nutrition, food security and health education programmes, especially for women and girls living with and affected by HIV/AIDS, including treatment for opportunistic diseases;

16. *Calls upon* Governments to intensify efforts to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and girls in relation to HIV/AIDS, including through challenging gender stereotypes, stigmatization, discriminatory attitudes and gender inequalities, and to encourage the active involvement of men and boys in this regard;

17. *Urges* Governments to strengthen legal, policy, administrative and other measures for the prevention and elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls, including harmful traditional and customary practices, abuse, early and forced marriage, rape, including marital rape, and other forms of sexual violence, battering and trafficking in women and girls, and to ensure that violence against women is addressed as an integral part of the national HIV/AIDS response;

18. *Stresses* that women should be empowered to protect themselves against violence and, in this regard, that women have the right to have control over and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality, including their sexual and reproductive health, free of coercion, discrimination and violence;

19. *Calls upon* all Governments and the international donor community to integrate a gender perspective in all matters of international assistance and cooperation and to take measures to ensure that resources concomitant with the impact of HIV/AIDS on women and girls are made available, in particular in funding provided to national HIV/AIDS programmes to promote and protect the human rights of women and girls in the context of the epidemic, and to achieve the gender-related goals found, inter alia, in the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS;

20. *Calls upon* Governments to integrate HIV prevention, voluntary counselling and testing of HIV into other health services, including sexual and reproductive health, family planning, maternity and tuberculosis services, as well as the provision of services for the prevention and treatment of sexually transmitted infections in the maternal to child transmission services for pregnant women infected by HIV;

21. *Encourages* the continued collaboration among the co-sponsors of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, the Global Fund to Fight HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and other international organizations to address and reduce the spread of sexually transmitted infections and HIV/AIDS, in particular in the context of emergency situations and as part of humanitarian efforts, and to seek actively the achievement of results for women and girls, and encourages also the mainstreaming of a gender perspective throughout their work;

22. *Requests* the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS and its co-sponsors, and other United Nations agencies responding to the HIV/AIDS pandemic, as well as the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, to integrate a gender and human rights perspective throughout their HIV/AIDS-related operations, including policy, planning, monitoring and evaluation, and to ensure that programmes and policies are developed and are resourced adequately to address the specific needs of women and girls;

23. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in a follow-up to his December 2005 letter to the United Nations Resident Coordinators on the establishment of joint United Nations teams on AIDS at the country level, to direct the United Nations Development Programme, as lead agency on technical support on gender and human rights within the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, to develop the HIV-related gender and human rights capacity for all United Nations staff providing technical assistance to Governments, to advance the national response to AIDS and to report on these efforts in 2008;

24. *Encourages* the United Nations to continue to support national monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in the context of the "Three Ones" principles, to enable the production and dissemination of comprehensive and timely information on the gender dimension of the pandemic, including through the collection of data disaggregated by sex, age and marital status, and in raising awareness about the critical intersection between gender inequality and HIV/AIDS;

25. *Requests* the Secretary-General to invite Member States to work in partnership with the Global Coalition on Women and HIV/AIDS, convened by the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS and its partners, to mobilize and support a wide range of national actors, including women's groups and networks of women living with HIV/AIDS, to ensure that national HIV/AIDS programmes are better able to respond to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of women and girls;

26. *Encourages* the United Nations system in its ongoing work in providing widespread information on the gender dimension of the pandemic, including through the collection of data disaggregated by sex, and in raising awareness about the critical intersection between gender equality and HIV/AIDS;

27. *Requests* Member States to work in partnership with the Global Coalition on Women and AIDS to ensure that the national HIV/AIDS programmes are better able to respond to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of women and girls;

28. *Urges* Governments to rapidly scale up access to treatment programmes to prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV and to encourage men to participate with women in programmes designed to prevent mother-to-child transmission, to encourage women and girls to participate in these programmes and to provide sustained treatment and care after pregnancy;

29. *Encourages* the design and implementation of programmes to encourage and enable men, including young men, to adopt safe non-coercive and responsible sexual and reproductive behaviour and to use effective methods to prevent the transmission of HIV/AIDS;

30. *Stresses* the importance of ensuring that young men and women have access to information and education, including peer education, and youth-specific HIV education, sexual education and services necessary for behavioural change, to develop the life skills required to reduce their vulnerability to HIV infection and reproductive ill health, in full partnership with young persons, parents, families, educators and health-care providers;

31. *Calls* for enhanced efforts by all relevant actors to include a gender perspective in the development of HIV/AIDS programmes and policies and in the training of personnel involved in implementing such programmes, including through focusing on the role of men and boys in addressing HIV/AIDS;

32. *Encourages* Governments and all other relevant actors to promote funding, both domestically and externally, and support and expedite action-oriented research leading to affordable methods controlled by women to prevent HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases, including microbicides and vaccines, and on strategies that empower women to protect themselves from sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, and methods of care, support and treatment for women of various ages, and to promote their involvement in all aspects of such research;

33. *Also encourages* Governments to increase the provision of resources and facilities to women who find themselves having to provide care and/or economic support for those infected with HIV/AIDS or affected by the pandemic, and for the survivors, particularly children and older persons, utilizing funds earmarked for care and support to reduce women's disproportionate burden of care;

34. *Urges* Governments to continue to promote the participation and the significant contribution of people living with HIV/AIDS, young people and civil society actors in addressing the problem of HIV/AIDS in all its aspects, including promoting a gender perspective, and also to promote their full involvement and participation in the design, planning, implementation and evaluation of HIV/AIDS programmes, as well as creating an enabling environment to combat stigmatization;

35. *Welcomes* the financial contributions made to date to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, urges further contributions to sustain the Fund, and calls upon all countries to encourage the private sector to contribute to the Fund;

36. *Reaffirms* the need for Governments, supported by relevant actors, and all stakeholders, including civil society and the private sector, to intensify national efforts and international cooperation in the implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS;

37. *Stresses* the importance of building up national competence and capacity to provide impact assessment of the epidemic which should be used in planning for prevention, treatment and care, and for addressing HIV/AIDS;

38. *Urges* the international community to complement and supplement, through increased international development assistance, efforts of the developing countries that commit increased national funds to fighting the HIV/AIDS pandemic, especially to address the needs of women and girls, particularly those countries most affected by HIV/AIDS, particularly in Africa, especially sub-Saharan Africa, and the Caribbean countries at high risk of expansion of the HIV/AIDS epidemic and countries in other affected regions whose resources for dealing with the epidemic are seriously limited;

39. *Invites* the Secretary-General to consider feminization and the gender dimensions of the epidemic when preparing the report requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 60/224 of 23 December 2005 and in making all preparations for and organization of the 2006 follow-up meeting on the outcome of the twenty-sixth special session: implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS;

40. *Recommends* that the 2006 follow-up meeting take measures to ensure the inclusion of gender-equality perspectives throughout its deliberations and that it pay attention to the situation of women and girls infected and affected by HIV/AIDS;

41. *Decides* to consider this question further at its fifty-first session.

Resolution 50/3
Advisability of the appointment of a special rapporteur on laws that discriminate against women*

The Commission on the Status of Women,

Recalling the commitment made in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action,[14] adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in 1995, to ensure equality and non-discrimination under the law and in practice[23] and the specific commitment made in paragraph 232 (d) to revoke any remaining laws that discriminate on the basis of sex and remove gender bias in the administration of justice,[24]

Noting the concern expressed in the further actions and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-third special session, that legislative and regulatory gaps, as well as lack of implementation and enforcement of legislation and regulations, perpetuate de jure as well as de facto inequality and discrimination, and in a few cases, new laws discriminating against women have been introduced,[25] and realizing that intensified efforts are needed towards the undertaking to review domestic

* For the discussion, see chap. II, paras. 72-77.

[23] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II, chap. IV.I, strategic objective I.2.

[24] Ibid., para. 232 (d).

[25] General Assembly resolution S-23/3, para. 27.

legislation with a view to striving to remove discriminatory provisions as soon as possible, preferably by 2005,[26]

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General on the advisability of the appointment of a special rapporteur on laws that discriminate against women,[27]

1. *Invites* the Secretary-General to bring to the attention of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and other relevant treaty bodies his report[27] with a view to eliciting their views on ways and means that could best complement the work of the existing mechanisms and enhance the Commission's capacity with respect to discriminatory laws, and also invites the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to provide its views thereon;

2. *Invites* Member States and observers to submit to the Secretary-General their further views on his report;

3. *Decides*, on the basis of the report of the Secretary-General and the requested views thereon, to consider at its fifty-first session the advisability of the appointment of a special rapporteur on laws that discriminate against women, bearing in mind the existing mechanisms with a view to avoiding duplication.

Decision 50/101
Documents considered by the Commission on the Status of Women under agenda item 3*

At its resumed 14th meeting, on 10 March 2006, the Commission on the Status of Women took note of the following documents:

(a) Report of the Secretary-General on measures taken and progress achieved in the follow-up to and implementation of the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly: review of progress made in mainstreaming a gender perspective in the development, implementation and evaluation of national policies and programmes;[28]

(b) Report of the Secretary-General on release of women and children taken hostage, including those subsequently imprisoned, in armed conflicts;[29]

(c) Report of the Secretary-General on economic advancement for women;[30]

(d) Report of the Secretary-General on the joint workplan of the Division for the Advancement of Women and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights;[31]

(e) Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the United Nations Development Fund for Women on the elimination of violence against women;[32]

* For the discussion, see chap. II, para. 1.
[26] Ibid., para. 68 (b).
[27] E/CN.6/2006/8.
[28] E/CN.6/2006/2.
[29] E/CN.6/2006/6.
[30] E/CN.6/2006/7.
[31] E/CN.4/2006/59-E/CN.6/2006/9.
[32] E/CN.6/2006/10-E/CN.4/2006/60.

(f) Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Director of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women on strengthening of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women;[33]

(g) Report of the Secretary-General on enhanced participation of women in development: an enabling environment for achieving gender equality and the advancement of women, taking into account, inter alia, the fields of education, health and work;[34]

(h) Report of the Secretary-General on equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes at all levels;[35]

Agreed conclusions

Enhanced participation of women in development: an enabling environment for achieving gender equality and the advancement of women, taking into account, inter alia, the fields of education, health and work*

1. The Commission on the Status of Women reaffirmed the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action,[14] the outcome documents of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century",[16] the United Nations Millennium Declaration of 2000,[21] the Declaration adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women,[36] the 2005 World Summit,[37] as well as all relevant General Assembly resolutions and outcomes of United Nations conferences; reiterated that women's empowerment and their full participation on the basis of equality in all spheres of society, including participation in the decision-making process and access to power, were fundamental for the achievement of equality, development, peace and security; and emphasized the need to ensure the full integration and full participation of women as both agents and beneficiaries in the development process and its commitment to strengthening and safeguarding a national and international enabling environment, inter alia, through promoting and protecting all human rights and fundamental freedoms, mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes, and promoting the full participation and empowerment of women and enhanced international cooperation.

2. The Commission reaffirmed also that the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action was an essential contribution to achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, and that the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women was of fundamental importance in sustainable development, achieving sustained economic growth, eradicating poverty and hunger and combating diseases, and that investing in the development of women and girls had a multiplier effect, in particular on productivity, efficiency and sustained

* For the discussion, see chap. II, paras. 25-31.

[33] E/CN.6/2006/11.

[34] E/CN.6/2006/12.

[35] E/CN.6/2006/13.

[36] *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2005, Supplement No. 27* and corrigendum (E/2005/27 and Corr.1), chap. I.A.

[37] See General Assembly resolution 60/1.

economic growth, in all sectors of the economy, especially in key areas such as agriculture, industry and services.

3. The Commission recalled that the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women stressed that the full and complete development of a country, the welfare of the world and the cause of peace required the maximum participation of women on equal terms with men in all fields.

4. The Commission recognized that all forms of violence against women and girls violated the enjoyment of their human rights and constituted a major impediment to the ability of women and girls to make use of their capabilities, limiting their participation and agency in development, including in the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

5. The Commission recognized also that the creation of an enabling environment at all levels was necessary to enhance women's participation in and benefit from development processes, and that challenges to the creation of an enabling environment included:

(a) Insufficient coherence and coordination between development policies and gender equality policies and strategies;

(b) Insufficient time-bound targets for implementation of gender equality policies and strategies;

(c) Underrepresentation of women in decision-making;

(d) Insufficient promotion and protection of the full enjoyment by women of all human rights;

(e) Persistent violence and multiple forms of discriminatory practices and attitudes against women;

(f) Insufficient recognition of the contributions of women to the economy and to all areas of public life;

(g) Unequal access to education and training, health care and decent work;

(h) Unequal access to opportunities, and unequal access to and control over resources, such as land, credit, capital, economic assets, and information and communication technologies;

(i) Insufficient political will and resources;

(j) Inadequate implementation of gender mainstreaming;

(k) Insufficient national mechanisms for monitoring, evaluation and accountability;

(l) Impact on women of HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis and other communicable diseases;

(m) Armed conflicts, lack of security and natural disasters;

(n) Slow and uneven implementation of commitments to the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals;

(o) Persistence of difficult socio-economic conditions that existed in many developing countries, which had resulted in the acceleration of the feminization of poverty;

(p) Insufficient international cooperation in the area of gender equality and empowerment of women in the context of poverty eradication and health, bearing in mind financing for development;

(q) Prevailing harmful cultural and traditional practices;

(r) Insufficient information and data and statistics disaggregated by sex;

(s) Insufficient progress in the promulgation of gender-responsive laws.

6. The Commission underlined that addressing such challenges at all levels required a systematic, comprehensive, integrated, multidisciplinary and multisectoral approach, with policy, legislative and programmatic interventions.

7. The Commission urged Governments and/or, as appropriate, the relevant entities of the United Nations system, other international and regional organizations, including the international financial institutions, national parliaments, political parties, and civil society, including the private sector, trade unions, academia, the media and non-governmental organizations and other actors, to take the following actions:

(a) Incorporate gender perspectives into all local and national planning, budgetary, monitoring and evaluation and reporting processes, and mechanisms relating to national development strategies, including strategies focused on the implementation of internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, fully utilizing existing gender equality policies and strategies;

(b) Elaborate and implement comprehensive gender-sensitive poverty eradication strategies that addressed social, structural and macroeconomic issues;

(c) Develop and implement effective national monitoring and evaluation mechanisms at all levels to evaluate progress towards gender equality, including through the collection, compilation and analysis and use of data disaggregated by age and by sex and gender statistics, and continue developing and using appropriate qualitative and quantitative indicators;

(d) Encourage and promote close cooperation between central authorities and local governments to develop programmes aimed at the achievement of gender equality, thereby granting equal opportunities for women and girls;

(e) Elaborate and implement strategies and policies, including targeted measures in support of their obligation to exercise due diligence to prevent all forms of violence against women and girls, provide protection to victims and investigate, prosecute and punish perpetrators of such violence, and recognize that violence against women and girls was a serious obstacle to the achievement of the objectives of equality, development and peace and had a negative impact on the social and economic development of communities and States;

(f) Continue efforts towards full and effective implementation of General Assembly resolution 57/337 of 3 July 2003 on prevention of armed conflict, and its

agreed conclusions on women's equal participation in conflict prevention, management and resolution and in post-conflict peacebuilding;[38]

(g) Continue efforts towards the full and effective implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) of 31 October 2000 on women and peace and security, recognizing the linkages between gender equality, peace, security and development;

(h) Take the necessary measures to ensure that women were accorded full and equal rights to own land and other property, including through inheritance;

(i) Take all appropriate measures to enable women to participate fully in decision-making at all levels in all aspects of their daily lives;

(j) Incorporate gender perspectives in all policies and programmes on international migration, promote the full enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms by women migrants, combat discrimination, exploitation, ill-treatment, unsafe working conditions and violence, including sexual violence and trafficking, and facilitate family reunification in an expeditious and effective manner, with due regard to applicable laws, as such reunification had a positive effect on the integration of migrants;

(k) Eliminate all forms of discrimination, sexual exploitation and violence against female refugees, asylum-seekers and internally displaced persons and promote their active involvement in decisions affecting their lives and communities, while recalling the relevant norms of international human rights law, international humanitarian law and international refugee law;

(l) Increase understanding of and capacity to implement gender mainstreaming as a strategy for achieving gender equality and women's empowerment, including by requiring the use of gender analysis as the basis for all policy and programme development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, in particular in the areas of health, education and employment;

(m) Develop and promote strategies to mainstream a gender perspective into the design and implementation of development and socio-economic policies and budgetary processes, and share best practices and encourage innovations in gender mainstreaming approaches;

(n) Mobilize adequate funding for gender-sensitive development policies and programmes and for national mechanisms for gender equality, through national, regional and international resource mobilization and gender-responsive budget processes in all sector areas, and allocate adequate funding for women-specific measures;

(o) Support women's organizations that strive to empower women and girls and improve their living conditions;

(p) Encourage enhanced coordination and collaboration between all mechanisms for the advancement of women and gender equality at all levels, such as women's ministries, gender equality commissions, relevant parliamentary committees, ombudspersons, gender focal points and working groups in line ministries, as well as with women's groups, associations and networks;

[38] Economic and Social Council resolution 2004/12.

(q) Take effective measures to eliminate discrimination, gender stereotypes and harmful traditional, cultural and customary practices;

(r) Develop and implement strategies to increase the involvement of men and boys in promoting gender equality and empowerment of women and girls through, inter alia, the elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls, the sharing of household work and family care, and the promotion of a culture of peace and tolerance, and encourage men and women to foster responsible sexual and reproductive behaviour and attitudinal changes to promote the realization of gender equality;

(s) Increase women's and girls' equal and effective access to and use of information and communication technologies, as well as applied technology, including through the transfer of knowledge and technology on concessional, preferential and favourable terms to developing countries, as mutually agreed, provision of training and infrastructure, involvement in the planning, development and production of content, and participation in management, governance and decision-making positions in regulatory or policymaking bodies for information and communication technologies;

(t) Invest in appropriate infrastructure and other projects, and create opportunities for economic empowerment in order to alleviate the burden of time-consuming everyday tasks on women and girls, allowing them, inter alia, to engage in income-generating activities and attend school;

(u) Give special attention to incorporating principles on advancing the equalization of opportunities in programmes, methods and processes to empower and support women and girls with disabilities;

(v) Call upon the international community to make efforts to mitigate the effects of excess volatility and economic disruption, which had a disproportionately negative impact on women, and to enhance trade opportunities for developing countries in order to improve the economic situation of women;

(w) Call upon States Parties to comply fully with their obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Optional Protocol thereto, take into consideration the concluding comments, as well as the general recommendations, of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women; call upon other States Parties to the Convention that had not yet done so to consider signing, ratifying or acceding to the Optional Protocol thereto; and reinforce, in efforts to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, the linkages with the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, as well as with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development[19] and the key actions for the further implementation of the Programme of Action.

8. The Commission underlined the fact that each country had the primary responsibility for its own sustainable development and poverty eradication, that the role of national policies and development strategies could not be overemphasized, and that concerted and concrete measures were required at all levels to enable developing countries to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development.

9. The Commission urged Governments to ensure that women, especially poor women in developing countries, benefited from the pursuit of effective, equitable, development-oriented and durable solutions to the external debt and debt-servicing problems of developing countries, including the option of official development assistance and debt cancellation, and called for continued international cooperation.

10. The Commission encouraged the international community, the United Nations system, the relevant regional and international organizations and the private sector and civil society to:

(a) Assist Governments, at their request, in building institutional capacity and developing national action plans or further implementing existing action plans for the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action;

(b) Provide the necessary financial resources to assist national Governments in their efforts to meet the development targets and benchmarks agreed upon at the major United Nations summits and conferences and their follow-up processes, including the World Summit for Social Development, the Fourth World Conference on Women, the International Conference on Population and Development, the Millennium Summit, the International Conference on Financing for Development, the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the Second World Assembly on Ageing and the twenty-third and twenty-fourth special sessions of the General Assembly;

(c) Give priority to assisting the efforts of developing countries to ensure the full and effective participation of women in deciding and implementing development strategies and integrating gender concerns into national programmes, including by providing adequate resources to operational activities for development in support of the efforts of Governments to ensure full and equal access of women to health care, capital, education, training and technology, as well as full and equal participation in all decision-making.

11. The Commission urged multilateral donors, and invited international financial institutions, within their respective mandates, and regional development banks to review and implement policies to support national efforts to ensure that a higher proportion of resources reached women, in particular in rural and remote areas.

12. The Commission underlined the importance of incorporating a gender, human rights and socio-economic perspective in all policies relevant to education, health and work and to creating an enabling environment for achieving gender equality and the advancement of women, and called upon Governments to:

(a) Ensure women's and girls' full and equal access to all levels of quality education and training, while ensuring progressively and on the basis of equal opportunities, that primary education was compulsory, accessible and available free to all;

(b) Incorporate gender perspectives and human rights in health-sector policies and programmes, pay attention to women's specific needs and priorities, ensure women's right to the highest attainable standards of physical and mental health and their access to affordable and adequate health-care services, including sexual, reproductive and maternal health care and life-saving obstetric care, in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, and recognize that the lack of economic

empowerment and independence increased women's vulnerability to a range of negative consequences, involving the risk of contracting HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis and other poverty-related diseases;

(c) Take all appropriate measures to respond to the concern that the HIV/AIDS pandemic reinforced gender inequalities, that women and girls bore a disproportionate share of the burden imposed by the HIV/AIDS crisis, that they were infected more easily, that they played a key role in care and that they had become more vulnerable to poverty as a result of the HIV/AIDS crisis;

(d) Promote respect and realization of the principles contained in the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-up,[39] consider ratification and full implementation of conventions of the International Labour Organization, design policies and programmes that were particularly relevant to providing equal access for women to productive employment and decent work, remove structural and legal barriers, as well as stereotypical attitudes to gender equality at work, promote equal pay for equal work or work of equal value, promote the recognition of the value of women's unremunerated work, and develop and promote policies that facilitated the reconciliation of employment and family responsibilities and access to work for women with disabilities.

Agreed conclusions

Equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes at all levels*

1. The Commission on the Status of Women reaffirmed the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action,[14] which emphasized that without the active participation of women and the incorporation of women's perspectives at all levels of decision-making, the goals of equality, development and peace could not be achieved, and that women's equal participation was a necessary condition for women's and girls' interests to be taken into account and was needed in order to strengthen democracy and promote its proper functioning.

2. The Commission reaffirmed the outcome document adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-third special session,[40] paragraph 23 of which acknowledged that despite general acceptance of the need for gender balance in decision-making bodies at all levels, a gap between de jure and de facto equality had persisted, and that women continued to be underrepresented at the legislative, ministerial and sub-ministerial levels, as well as at the highest levels of the corporate sector and other economic and social institutions, and drew attention to the obstacles that hindered women's entry into decision-making positions.

3. The Commission reaffirmed also the commitment to the equal participation of women and men in public life enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and in the Convention on the Political Rights of Women,[41] which stated that women should be on equal terms with men, without any discrimination, entitled to vote in all elections, eligible for election to all publicly elected bodies established by national

* For the discussion, see chap. II, paras. 32-40.

[39] Adopted on 18 June 1998 by the International Labour Conference at its eighty-sixth session.

[40] General Assembly resolution S-23/3 annex.

[41] General Assembly resolutions 217 A (III), and 2200 A (XXI), annex and 640 (VII), annex.

law, and entitled to hold public office and to exercise all public functions established by national law.

4. The Commission recalled the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, which stated, inter alia, that States Parties should take all appropriate measures, including positive measures and temporary special measures, to eliminate discrimination against women and girls in the political and public life of the country.[42]

5. The Commission urged States parties to comply fully with their obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Optional Protocol thereto and to take into consideration the concluding comments, as well as the general recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.[43]

6. The Commission noted that some States parties had modified their reservations, expressed satisfaction that some reservations had been withdrawn and urged States parties to limit the extent of any reservations that they lodged to the Convention, to formulate any such reservations as precisely and as narrowly as possible, to ensure that no reservations were incompatible with the object and purpose of the Convention, to review their reservations regularly with a view to withdrawing them and to withdraw reservations that were contrary to the object and purpose of the Convention.[44]

7. The Commission recalled General Assembly resolution 58/142, of 22 December 2003, on women and political participation, in paragraph 1 of which the Assembly urged all stakeholders to develop a comprehensive set of programmes and policies to increase women's participation, especially in political decision-making.

8. The Commission also recalled that its agreed conclusions 1997/2 on women in power and decision-making recognized the need to accelerate the implementation of strategies that promoted gender balance in political decision-making and to mainstream a gender perspective in all stages of policy formulation and decision-making.

9. The Commission welcomed the 2005 World Summit, which had reaffirmed that the full and effective implementation of the goals and objectives of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action was an essential contribution to achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, and had resolved to promote increased representation of women in Government decision-making bodies, including through ensuring their equal opportunity to participate fully in the political process.[45]

10. The Commission recognized that some progress had been achieved since the Fourth World Conference on Women in women's participation in decision-making at all levels. Introduction of policies and programmes, including positive measures, at the local, national and international levels, had resulted in an increase in women's participation in decision-making processes.

[42] General Assembly resolution 34/180, annex.
[43] General Assembly resolution 60/230, para. 4.
[44] Ibid., para. 6.
[45] General Assembly resolution 60/1, para. 58.

11. The Commission expressed concern at the serious and persistent obstacles, which were many and varied in nature, that still hindered the advancement of women and further affected their participation in decision-making processes, including, inter alia, the persistent feminization of poverty, the lack of equal access to health, education, training and employment, armed conflict, the lack of security and natural disasters.

12. The Commission underlined the importance of the empowerment of women and their effective participation in decision-making and policymaking processes as critical tools to prevent and eliminate gender-based violence, and recognized that eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls enabled them to participate equally in decision-making.

13. The Commission expressed concern about the lack, at the local, national, regional and international levels, of sufficient information and data disaggregated by sex on the participation of women and men in decision-making processes in all areas, including the economy, the public and private sectors, the judiciary, international affairs, academia, trade unions, the media, non-governmental organizations and others.

14. The Commission reaffirmed the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peacebuilding, and stressed the importance of their full and equal participation in all efforts to maintain and promote peace and security, and the need to increase their role in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution and the rebuilding of post-conflict society, in accordance with Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) of 31 October 2000 and the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly.[46]

15. The Commission recognized that gender equality, development and peace were key issues for the promotion of women, and that new efforts were needed by all actors to create an enabling environment in decision-making.

16. The Commission reaffirmed the urgent goal of achieving 50/50 gender distribution in all categories of posts within the United Nations system, especially at senior and policymaking levels, with full respect for the principle of equitable geographical distribution, in conformity with Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations, and also taking into account the continuing lack of representation or the underrepresentation of women from certain countries, in particular from developing countries, countries with economies in transition, and unrepresented or largely underrepresented Member States.[47]

17. The Commission urged Governments, and/or, as appropriate, the relevant entities of the United Nations system, other international and regional organizations, including the international financial institutions, national parliaments, political parties, civil society, including the private sector, trade unions, academia, the media, non-governmental organizations and other actors, to take the following actions:

(a) Ensure that women had the right to vote and exercise that right without duress, persuasion or coercion;

[46] See General Assembly resolution 58/142, preamble.
[47] See General Assembly resolution 58/144, para. 3.

(b) Review, as appropriate, existing legislation, including electoral law, and remove or modify, as appropriate, provisions that hindered women's equal participation in decision-making, and adopt positive actions and temporary special measures, as appropriate, to enhance women's equal participation in decision-making processes at all levels;

(c) Establish concrete goals, targets and benchmarks for achieving equal participation of women and men in decision-making bodies at all levels and in all areas, especially in areas of macroeconomic policy, trade, labour, budgets, defence and foreign affairs, the media and the judiciary, including through positive actions and temporary special measures, as appropriate;

(d) Develop and fund policies and programmes, including innovative measures, to build a critical mass of women leaders, executives and managers, with the goal of achieving a gender balance at all levels and in all areas, in particular in strategic economic, social and political decision-making positions;

(e) Establish the goal of gender balance in decision-making in administration and public appointments at all levels, develop alternative approaches and changes in institutional structures and practices, including gender action plans, which established concrete strategies and budgets for the achievement of consistent gender mainstreaming as a strategy for promoting gender equality objectives, in legislation and public policies, among others;

(f) Ensure women's full and equal participation and representation at all decision-making levels in all aspects of peace processes and in post-conflict peacebuilding, reconstruction, rehabilitation and reconciliation processes;

(g) Encourage greater involvement of all marginalized women in decision-making at all levels and address and counter the barriers faced by marginalized women in accessing and participating in politics and decision-making;[48]

(h) Ensure that gender perspectives were incorporated in development policies and programmes, and in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, to ensure that women and all other members of society benefited from development and that women were empowered to assume leadership positions;

(i) Promote and strengthen international cooperation to accelerate the development process in which women played a key role and should be equal beneficiaries;

(j) Introduce more effective measures aimed at eradicating poverty of women and improving their living conditions to promote the realization of their full human potential, and enable their advancement and their equal participation in decision-making;

(k) Ensure that women and girls had equal access to education in all forms and that education was gender-sensitive, and promote educational programmes in which women and girls would be equipped with the necessary knowledge and prepared to participate equally in decision-making processes in all spheres of life and at all levels;

[48] General Assembly resolution 58/142, para. 1 (k).

(l) Ensure women's and girls' access to training that enabled them to develop their skills, capacities and expertise to exercise leadership, including tools, training and special programmes necessary to enter, inter alia, into politics, including at the highest levels, recognizing existing power differentials in society and the need to respect different positive models of leadership;

(m) Ensure women's equal access to decent work, full and productive employment, productive and financial resources and information, in order to facilitate their full and equal participation in decision-making processes at all levels;

(n) Introduce objective and transparent procedures for recruitment and gender-sensitive career planning to enable women to assume decision-making positions at all levels and in all areas in order to break the glass ceiling;[49]

(o) Eliminate occupational segregation, gender wage gaps, as well as discrimination against women, including marginalized women, in the labour market, through legal and policy measures, including by increasing opportunities for women and girls, as well as men and boys, to work in non-traditional sectors;

(p) Ensure women's access to microcredit and microfinance schemes, which had proven to be effective means to empower women and could create an enabling environment to facilitate their full and equal participation in the decision-making processes at all levels, particularly at the grass-roots level;

(q) Foster an enabling environment in decision-making processes at all levels, including through measures aimed at reconciling family and employment responsibilities, inter alia, by better sharing of paid and unpaid work between women and men;

(r) Take measures to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls, in order to promote their full and equal participation in public and political life;

(s) Promote women's leadership in all areas and at all levels and remove all barriers that directly or indirectly hindered the participation of women, in order to increase the visibility and influence of women in decision-making processes;

(t) Facilitate networking and mentoring among women leaders and girls, as appropriate, at all levels and in all areas, including in politics, academia, trade unions, the media and civil society organizations, specifically women's groups and networks, including through the use of information and communication technology, as appropriate;

(u) Encourage, particularly among men and women in decision-making positions, the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women, and support women's participation, representation and leadership in decision-making processes at all levels, including the exchange of best practices and awareness-raising;

(v) Develop strategies to increase the involvement of men and boys in promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women, through, inter alia, encouraging the sharing of household work and care;

[49] See Commission on the Status of Women, agreed conclusions 1997/3, para. 10.

(w) Develop strategies to eliminate gender stereotypes in all spheres of life, particularly in the media, and foster the positive portrayal of women and girls as leaders and decision makers on all levels and in all areas;

(x) Recognize the importance of women's participation in decision-making in all areas, including the political process, provide fair and balanced coverage of male and female candidates, cover participation in women's political organizations and ensure coverage of issues that had a particular impact on women;[50]

(y) Adopt clear rules, as necessary, for candidate selection within parties, including, as appropriate, the implementation of concrete goals, targets and benchmarks, including, where appropriate, temporary special measures, such as quotas, for achieving equitable representation of women candidates in elected positions;

(z) Promote women's candidacies in elections, inter alia and as appropriate, through the adoption of specific measures, such as training programmes and recruitment drives and, as a temporary special measure, consider funding for women candidates;

(aa) Make efforts to ensure equal opportunities during election campaigns, including equal access to the media and to financial and other resources, as appropriate;

(bb) Facilitate the inclusion of women in decision-making positions within electoral management bodies and observer commissions and give consideration to gender equality and the empowerment of women in the structure and activities of such bodies;

(cc) Consider establishing parliamentary standing or ad hoc committees or other statutory bodies on gender equality and empowerment of women, with cross-party representation, where appropriate, to monitor and review the implementation of existing laws and constitutional provisions, in line with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, where applicable, and the commitments to implement the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, as well as taking into account recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, where applicable;

(dd) Consider ratifying and implementing relevant instruments relating to full political, economic, social and cultural rights for women and girls, especially the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child;

(ee) Reaffirm the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a vital instrument for the advancement of women and, in that regard, take measures to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals;

[50] General Assembly resolution 58/142, para. 2 (m).

(ff) Encourage public dissemination of national periodic reports to the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, as well as concluding comments provided by the Committee;

(gg) Promote collaboration among all relevant actors, such as parliaments, national machineries for the advancement of women and other relevant national mechanisms, and women's groups and networks in civil society to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women;

(hh) Support the mainstreaming of a gender perspective at all levels and stages of the budgetary process, including through awareness-raising and training, where appropriate;

(ii) Strengthen research, monitoring and evaluation of the progress of women's participation in decision-making at all levels, in particular in areas where there was a dearth of information, including, as appropriate, through the development of acceptable standardized methodology for systematic collection of gender-specific data and statistics, disaggregated by sex and other relevant factors, and disseminate lessons learned and good practices;

(jj) Ensure political will to recognize the role of women in development in all spheres of life, to promote gender equality and favour the participation of women in decision-making positions.

Chapter II

Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century"

1. The Commission considered item 3 of the agenda at its 2nd, 6th, 7th, 8th, 10th, 11th, 13th and 14th meetings, on 27 February, 1, 2, 3, 8, 10 and 16 March. It had before it the following documents:

(a) Report of the Secretary-General on the measures taken and progress achieved in the follow-up to and implementation of the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly: review of progress made in mainstreaming a gender perspective in the development, implementation and evaluation of national policies and programmes (E/CN.6/2006/2);

(b) Report of the Secretary-General on proposals for a multi-year programme of work of the Commission on the Status of Women (E/CN.6/2006/3);

(c) Report of the Secretary-General on the situation of and assistance to Palestinian women (E/CN.6/2006/4);

(d) Report of the Secretary-General on the situation of women and girls in Afghanistan (E/CN.6/2006/5);

(e) Report of the Secretary-General on release of women and children taken hostage, including those subsequently imprisoned, in armed conflicts (E/CN.6/2006/6);

(f) Report of the Secretary-General on economic advancement for women (E/CN.6/2006/7);

(g) Report of the Secretary-General on advisability of the appointment of a special rapporteur on laws that discriminate against women (E/CN.6/2006/8);

(h) Report of the Secretary-General on the joint workplan of the Division for the Advancement of Women and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (E/CN.4/2006/59-E/CN.6/2006/9);

(i) Report of the Secretary-General on enhanced participation of women in development: an enabling environment for achieving gender equality and the advancement of women, taking into account, inter alia, the fields of education, health and work (E/CN.6/2006/12);

(j) Report of the Secretary-General on equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes at all levels (E/CN.6/2006/13);

(k) Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the United Nations Development Fund for Women on the elimination of violence against women (E/CN.6/2006/10-E/CN.4/2006/60);

(l) Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Director of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women on

the strengthening of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (E/CN.6/2006/11);

(m) Letter dated 21 December 2005 from the President of the Economic and Social Council to the Chairperson of the Commission on the Status of Women (E/CN.6/2006/14);

(n) Statements submitted by non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (E/CN.6/2006/NGO/1-31);

(o) Note by the Secretary-General on the results of the thirty-fourth session of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (E/CN.6/2006/CRP.1);

(p) Report of the Secretary-General on the discussion guide on the high-level round table: incorporating gender perspectives into the national development strategies for implementing the internationally agreed development goals requested at the 2005 World Summit (E/CN.6/2006/CRP.2);

2. At the 2nd meeting, on 27 February, introductory statements were made by the Assistant Secretary-General and Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, the Director of the Division for the Advancement of Women and the Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM).

3. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of South Africa (on behalf of the Group of 77 and China), Nigeria, Indonesia, the United Republic of Tanzania, El Salvador and China, and by the observers for Austria (on behalf of the European Union; the acceding countries Bulgaria and Romania; the candidate countries Turkey and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia and Montenegro; as well as Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova, which aligned themselves with the statement), Sweden, Italy, Antigua and Barbuda and Namibia.

4. At the 6th meeting, on 1 March, statements were made by the representatives of Botswana (on behalf of the Southern African Development Community (SADC)), Iceland, Ghana, the Congo, Burkina Faso, Malaysia and Peru, and by the observers for Lesotho, Malawi, Norway, Finland, Azerbaijan, Mexico, Iraq, Ethiopia, Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal, the Niger, Nepal, France, Greece, Angola, Kenya and Barbados.

5. At the same meeting, the Director of the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women made a statement.

6. Also at the 6th meeting, statements were made by the representatives of the following non-governmental organizations: Coalition of Islamic Organizations and Asia Pacific Women's Watch.

7. At the 7th meeting, on 1 March, statements were made by the representatives of the Dominican Republic, Japan, the Russian Federation, the United States of America, the Republic of Korea, Kazakhstan, Canada, the Sudan, Cuba, and by the observers for Ukraine, Guyana (on behalf of the Rio Group), Rwanda, the Syrian Arab Republic, Pakistan, Chile, the Philippines, Australia, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Zambia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Viet Nam, India, Tuvalu, Yemen and Papua New Guinea (on behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum).

8. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of the following non-governmental organizations: Socialist International Women and Women in Law and Development in Africa.

9. At the 8th meeting, on 2 March, statements were made by the representatives of Turkey, Suriname, Thailand, Croatia, Armenia and the United Arab Emirates and by the observers for Grenada, Myanmar, Turkmenistan, Jamaica, Bangladesh, Liechtenstein, Burundi, Haiti, Egypt, Ecuador, New Zealand, Israel, Solomon Islands, Singapore, Belarus, Colombia, Fiji, Switzerland and Argentina.

10. At the same meeting, statements were made by the Chairperson of the Commission on Human Rights.

11. Also at the 8th meeting, a statement was made by the observer for the Holy See.

12. At the same meeting, the representatives of the following non-governmental organizations made statements: International Council of Women and French Coordination for the European Women's Lobby.

13. At the 10th meeting, on 3 March, the Assistant Secretary-General and Special Adviser on Gender Issues and the Advancement of Women made an oral report, under agenda item 3 (a), on the improvement of the status of women in the United Nations system.

14. Also at the 10th meeting, on 3 March, statements were made by the representatives of Morocco, Algeria, Guatemala, the Islamic Republic of Iran, and by the observers for the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Mozambique, Qatar, Cameroon, Uruguay, Sri Lanka, Saudi Arabia and Kyrgyzstan, as well as by the observer for Palestine.

15. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the Commonwealth Secretariat, the International Organization for Migration and the Council of Europe.

16. Also at the 10th meeting, statements were also made by the representatives of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the World Food Programme, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the World Bank, the International Labour Organization, the United Nations Population Fund, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme.

Agenda item 3 (a)
Review of gender mainstreaming in entities of the United Nations system

Agenda item 3 (c)
Implementation of strategic objectives and action in critical areas of concern and further actions and initiatives

17. At its 3rd meeting, on 27 February, the Commission held parallel high-level round tables on the theme "Incorporating gender perspectives into national development strategies, as requested at the 2005 World Summit, for achieving the

internationally agreed development goals, including Millennium Development Goals".

High-level round table A

18. The Commission held a high-level round table chaired by Carmen Gallardo (El Salvador), Chairperson of the Commission.

19. The delegations of the following countries participated: Angola, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Brazil, Canada, China, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, El Salvador, Finland, Germany, Ghana, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Kazakhstan, Namibia, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Senegal, Slovakia, South Africa, Spain, the Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, the United Republic of Tanzania, Yemen and Zambia.

20. The following invited experts made presentations: Bharati Silawal (United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)), Caroline Osero-ageng'o (Equality Now, Kenya), Shanthi Dairiam (International Women's Rights Action Watch, Malaysia) and Meagen Baldwin (Network Women in Development Europe, Belgium).

High-level round table B

21. The Commission held a high-level round table chaired by Szilvia Szabo (Hungary), Vice-Chairperson of the Commission.

22. The delegations of the following countries participated: Barbados, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Egypt, Ethiopia, Fiji, Hungary, Malawi, Malaysia, Mexico, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Norway, the Republic of Korea, Turkey, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Viet Nam.

23. The following invited experts made presentations: Aminata Toure (United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)), Arthur Erken (United Nations Development Group (UNDG)), Tone Bleie (Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)), Monique Essed (Women's Environment and Development Organization) and Anastasia Posadskaya-Vanderbeck (Open Society Institute).

24. At its 13th meeting, on 10 March, the Commission took note of the summary submitted by the Chairpersons (E/CN.6/2006/CRP.7).*

Panel discussions on agenda item 3 (c) (i) Enhanced participation of women in development: an enabling environment for achieving gender equality and the advancement of women, taking into account, inter alia, the fields of education, health and work

25. At its 4th meeting, on 28 February, the Commission held a panel discussion chaired by Szilvia Szabo (Hungary), Vice-Chairperson of the Commission, on enhanced participation of women in development: an enabling environment for

* http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/csw50/documents.htm

achieving gender equality and the advancement of women, taking into account, inter alia, the fields of education, health and work.

26. Presentations were made by the following panellists: Torild Skard (Researcher, Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, Oslo), Ana Elisa Osorio (former Minister of Environment and Natural Resources of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela), Bernadette Lahai (Member of Parliament and Gender Specialist, Sierra Leone), Evy Messell (Director, Bureau for Gender Equality, ILO) and Akanksha Marphatia (Senior Education Policy Analyst, Action Aid International, London).

27. The Commission then held a dialogue with the panellists, in which the following delegations participated: Austria, Bangladesh, Benin, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Canada, China, the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Ghana, Honduras, Indonesia, Israel, Jamaica, Kenya, Mexico, Morocco, New Zealand, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Senegal, South Africa, Turkey, Yemen and Zambia.

28. At its 14th meeting, on 10 March, the Commission took note of the moderator's summary of the panel discussion (E/CN.6/2006/CRP.8).*

29. Also at the same meeting, Dicky Komar (Indonesia), Vice-Chairperson of the Commission, reported on the outcome of informal consultations held.

30. At its resumed 14th meeting, on 16 March, the Commission had before it the draft agreed conclusions submitted by the Chairperson of the Commission (E/CN.6/2006/L.10).

31. At the same meeting, following a statement by the observer for the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, the Vice-Chairperson corrected the first paragraph of the text by deleting the word "Outcome" after the words "2005 World Summit". The Commission then adopted the draft agreed conclusions on enhanced participation of women in development: an enabling environment for achieving gender equality and the advancement of women, taking into account, inter alia, the fields of education, health and work, as orally corrected (see chap. I, sect. D).

Panel discussion on agenda item 3 (c) (ii) Equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes at all levels

32. At its 5th meeting, on 28 February, the Commission held a panel discussion on equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes at all levels, moderated by Szilvia Szabo (Hungary), Vice-Chairperson of the Commission.

33. At the same meeting, presentations were made by Nesreen Barwari (Minister of Municipalities and Public Works, Iraq), Vida Kanopiene (Professor, Head of Department of Social Policy, Mykolas Romeris University, Lithuania), Françoise Gaspard (Expert, Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)), Anders B. Johnsson (Secretary-General, Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), Geneva) and Amy Mazur (Professor, Department of Political Science, Washington State University, United States of America).

* http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/csw50/documents.htm.

34. The Commission then held a dialogue with the panellists in which the following delegations participated: Austria, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Botswana, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Canada, China, the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, El Salvador, Fiji, Gabon, Ghana, Indonesia, Japan, Kenya, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, the Republic of Korea, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Zambia.

35. The representative of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) also participated.

36. At its 14th meeting, on 10 March, the Commission took note of the summary of the panel discussion submitted by the moderator (E/CN.6/2006/CRP.9).*

37. At the same meeting, the Vice-Chairperson of the Commission reported on the outcome of informal consultations held.

38. At its resumed 14th meeting, on 16 March, the Commission had before it the draft agreed conclusions submitted by the Chairperson of the Commission (E/CN.6/2006/L.9).

39. At the same meeting, the Secretary corrected operative paragraph 17 (ii) by replacing the word "full" by the word "good".

40. Also at the resumed 14th meeting, the Commission adopted the draft agreed conclusions on equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes at all levels, as orally corrected (see chap. I, sect. D).

Panel discussion on agenda item 3 (b)
High-level panel on the gender dimensions of international migration

41. At its 9th meeting, on 2 March, the Commission held a high-level panel on the theme "The gender dimensions of international migration", moderated by Carmen Maria Gallardo (El Salvador), Chairperson of the Commission.

42. At the same meeting, statements were made by the following panellists: Monica Boyd (Canada Research Chair in Sociology, University of Toronto); Milagros B. Asis (Director, Research and Publications, Scalabrini Migration Center, Philippines); Manuel Orozco (Senior Associate, Inter-American Dialogue, United States of America); Irena Omelaniuk (Migration Adviser, Development Prospects Group, World Bank); and Ndioro Ndiaye (Deputy Director General, International Organization for Migration).

43. An interactive dialogue with the panellists ensued, in which the following delegations participated: Angola, Austria, Bangladesh, Belgium, Botswana, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Israel, Kenya, Mexico, the Netherlands, Nigeria, the Philippines, South Africa, Spain, Turkey and Zambia.

44. The Director of the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women participated in the dialogue.

* http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/csw50/documents.htm.

45. The representative of the following non-governmental organizations also participated in the dialogue: Human Rights Advocate and Global Unions.

46. At its 13th meeting, on 10 March, the Commission decided to transmit the summary of the Chairperson on the high-level panel discussion on the gender dimensions of international migration, through the Economic and Social Council, to the General Assembly at its High-level dialogue on International Migration and Development, to be held in New York on 14 and 15 September 2006 (see chap. I, sect. A).

Action taken by the Commission

Release of women and children taken hostage, including those subsequently imprisoned, in armed conflicts

47. At the 11th meeting, on 8 March, the observer for Azerbaijan, on behalf of Azerbaijan, Armenia, Bangladesh, Belarus, Burkina Faso, Georgia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia, Nigeria, the Philippines, Senegal, Tajikistan, Turkey, Ukraine and Uzbekistan, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Release of women and children taken hostage, including those subsequently imprisoned, in armed conflicts" (E/CN.6/2006/L.1). Subsequently, Algeria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Iraq, the Niger, Pakistan, Qatar, the Republic of Korea, Senegal, South Africa, the Sudan and Yemen joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

48. At the same meeting, the representative of Azerbaijan orally revised the text as follows:

(a) In the fifth preambular paragraph, after the word "Recalling", the words "General Assembly resolution 57/337 of 3 July 2003 on prevention of armed conflict" were inserted;

(b) In operative paragraph 2, the words "in situations of armed conflict in violation of international humanitarian law" were replaced by the words "as such, in violation of the international humanitarian law in situations of armed conflict";

(c) In operative paragraph 10, the words "to continue" were inserted before the words "to address".

49. At the 13th meeting, on 10 March, the Secretary read out a statement on the programme budget implications of the draft resolution.

50. At the same meeting, the Commission adopted the draft resolution on release of women and children taken hostage, including those subsequently imprisoned, in armed conflicts, as orally revised (see chap. I, sect. D, resolution 50/1).

51. After the adoption of the resolution, a statement was made by the representative of the United States of America.

Women, the girl child and HIV/AIDS

52. At the 11th meeting, on 8 March, the representative of Botswana, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Southern African Development Community, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Women, the girl child and HIV/AIDS" (E/CN.6/2006/L.2). Subsequently, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia,

Ghana, Mexico and Uruguay joined in sponsoring the draft resolution, which read as follows:

"*The Commission on the Status of Women,*

"*Reaffirming* the relevant strategic objectives and actions set out in the Beijing Platform for Action[1] and the outcome documents of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly,[2] the goals and targets set forth in the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS,[3] adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-sixth special session, in 2001, and the HIV/AIDS-related goals contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration of 2000,[4] in particular the aim of Member States to have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS,

"*Recalling* the commitment from the 2005 World Summit of developing and implementing a package for HIV prevention, treatment and care with the aim of coming as close as possible to the goal of universal access to treatment by 2010,

"*Acknowledging* that prevention, care, support and treatment for those infected and affected by HIV/AIDS are mutually reinforcing elements of an effective response that must be integrated into a comprehensive approach to combat the epidemic,

"*Recognizing* that populations destabilized by armed conflict, humanitarian emergencies and natural disasters, including refugees, internally displaced persons and, in particular, women and children, are at an increased risk of exposure to HIV infection,

"*Deeply concerned* that the global HIV/AIDS pandemic disproportionately affects women and girls and that the majority of new HIV infections occur among young people,

"*Concerned* that women's unequal legal, economic and social status, as well as violence against women and girls and other cultural and physiological factors, increases their vulnerability to HIV/AIDS,

"*Also concerned* that women and girls have different and unequal access to and use of health resources for the prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS,

"1. *Stresses with deep concern* that the HIV/AIDS emergency, with its devastating scale and impact on women and girls, requires urgent actions in all fields and at all levels;

"2. *Stresses* that gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls are fundamental elements in the reduction of their vulnerability to HIV/AIDS and are essential for reversing the pandemic;

"3. *Expresses its concern* that the HIV/AIDS pandemic reinforces gender inequalities, that women and girls bear a disproportionate share of the

[1] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

[2] Resolution S-23/2, annex, and resolution S-23/3, annex.

[3] General Assembly resolution S-26/2, annex.

[4] General Assembly resolution 55/2.

burden imposed by the HIV/AIDS crisis, that they are more easily infected, that they play a key role in care and that they become more vulnerable to poverty as a result of the HIV/AIDS crisis;

"4. *Reaffirms* the need for Governments, supported by relevant actors, including civil society, to intensify national efforts and international cooperation in the implementation of the commitments contained in the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS[3] and the Beijing Platform for Action[1] and to work towards effectively reflecting in their national policies and strategies the gender dimension of the pandemic, in line with the time-bound goals of the Declaration and the Platform for Action;

"5. *Also reaffirms* the commitment to achieve universal access to reproductive health care by 2015, as set out in the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development,[5] integrating this goal into strategies to attain internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration[4] aimed at reducing maternal mortality, improving maternal health, reducing child mortality, promoting gender equality, combating HIV/AIDS and eradicating poverty;

"6. *Urges* Governments to take all necessary measures to empower women and strengthen their economic independence and to protect and promote their full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms in order to enable them to protect themselves from HIV infection;

"7. *Also urges* Governments to strengthen initiatives that would increase the capacities of women and adolescent girls to protect themselves from the risk of HIV infection, principally through the provision of health care and health services, including for sexual and reproductive health, that integrate HIV prevention, treatment and care and include voluntary counselling and testing and through prevention education that promotes gender equality within a culturally and gender-sensitive framework;

"8. *Further urges* Governments to expand access to treatment, in a progressive and sustainable manner, including the prevention and treatment of opportunistic diseases and effective use of antiretroviral medication and to promote access to low-cost effective drugs and related pharmaceutical products;

"9. *Urges* Governments to ensure that women and girls have equitable and sustained access to treatment for AIDS and opportunistic infections, appropriate to their age, health and nutritional status, with the full protection of their human rights, including their sexual and reproductive rights, and to monitor access to treatment by age, sex and continuity of care;

"10. *Calls upon* Governments to intensify efforts to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and girls in relation to HIV/AIDS, including through challenging stereotypes, stigmatization, discriminatory attitudes and gender inequalities, and to encourage the active involvement of men and boys in this regard;

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[5] *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5-13 September 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

"11. *Encourages* the continued collaboration among the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, the World Health Organization and other United Nations agencies, as well as the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and other international organizations, to address and reduce the spread of HIV/AIDS, in particular in the context of emergency situations and as part of humanitarian efforts, and also encourages the mainstreaming of a gender perspective in their work;

"12. *Further encourages* the ongoing work by the United Nations system in providing widespread information on the gender dimension of the pandemic, including through the collection of sex-disaggregated data, and in raising awareness about the critical intersection between gender inequality and HIV/AIDS;

"13. *Requests* Member States to work in partnership with the Global Coalition on Women and AIDS, convened by the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS and partners, to ensure that national AIDS programmes better respond to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of women and girls;

"14. *Urges* Governments to rapidly scale up access to treatment programmes to prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV, to encourage men to participate with women in programmes designed to prevent mother-to-child transmission and to ensure that women who participate in these programmes are guaranteed sustained treatment and care after pregnancy;

"15. *Encourages* the design and implementation of programmes to enable men, including young men, to adopt safe and responsible sexual and reproductive behaviour and to use effective methods to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS;

"16. *Recognizes* the importance of young men and women having access to the information, education, including peer education and youth-specific HIV education, and services necessary to develop the life skills required to reduce their vulnerability to HIV infection, with the full participation of young persons, parents, families, educators and health-care providers;

"17. *Calls for* enhanced efforts by all relevant actors to include a gender perspective in the development of HIV/AIDS programmes and policies and in the training of personnel involved in implementing such programmes, including through focusing on the role of men and boys in addressing HIV/AIDS;

"18. *Urges* Governments to continue to promote the participation and the significant contribution of people living with HIV/AIDS, young people and civil-society actors in addressing the problem of HIV/AIDS in all its aspects, including promoting a gender perspective, and also to promote their full involvement and participation in the design, planning, implementation and evaluation of HIV/AIDS programmes;

"19. *Welcomes* the financial contributions made to date to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, urges further contributions to sustain the Fund, and calls upon all countries to encourage the private sector to contribute to the Fund;

"20. *Calls upon* all Governments to take measures to ensure that the necessary resources are made available, in particular from donor countries and also from national budgets, in line with the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS;

"21. *Invites* the Secretary-General to consider the gender dimensions of the epidemic when preparing the report requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 60/224 of 23 December 2005 and in making all preparations for and organizing the 2006 follow-up meeting on the outcome of the twenty-sixth special session of the General Assembly;

"22. *Recommends* that the 2006 follow-up meeting on the outcome of the twenty-sixth special session of the General Assembly take measures to ensure the inclusion of gender-equality perspectives throughout its deliberations and that it pay attention to the situation of women, the girl child and HIV/AIDS;

"23. *Decides* to consider this question further at its fifty-first session."

53. At the 14th meeting, on 10 March, the Commission had before it a revised draft resolution, submitted by Botswana, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Southern African Development Community, and Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Mexico and Uruguay entitled "Women, the girl child and HIV/AIDS" (E/CN.6/2003/L.2/Rev.1).

54. At the same meeting, the Commission was informed that the draft resolution contained no programme budget implications.

55. Also at the 14th meeting, the representative of Botswana orally revised the text, as follows:

(a) Two new preambular paragraphs were inserted before the fifth preambular paragraph as follows:

"*Taking note* of the Guidelines on HIV/AIDS and Human Rights, as adopted by the Second International Consultation on HIV/AIDS and Human Rights, annexed to the report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.4/1997/37, annex I),"

"*Recognizing* the need to ensure the respect, protection and fulfilment of human rights in the context of HIV/AIDS,";

(b) In the fifth preambular paragraph, the word "Also" was inserted after the word "*Recognizing*";

(c) In the seventh preambular paragraph, the words "including poverty" were inserted after the words "economic and social status" and the words "premature and early sexual relations, commercial sexual exploitation" replaced the words "cross-generational sex, transactional sex";

(d) In operative paragraph 10, the words "and that they are available to all those who need them" were deleted;

(e) A new operative paragraph was inserted before operative paragraph 11, as follows:

"*Reminds* States to consider that flexibilities in trade-related intellectual property rights can be used by States when necessary to protect public health and address public health crises;"

(f) In operative paragraph 13, the first word "Also" was replaced by the word "Urges"; and the words "in accordance with, inter alia, the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and other relevant international human rights instruments" was inserted after the words "reproductive rights and sexual health";

(g) In operative paragraph 14, the words "universal and" were deleted;

(h) In operative paragraph 19, the words "interventions, including" were deleted;

(i) In operative paragraph 29, the words "for behavioural change" were inserted after the words "sexual education and services necessary";

(j) Two new operative paragraphs were inserted before operative paragraph 31 as follows:

"*Encourages* Governments and all other relevant actors to promote funding both domestically and externally, and support and expedite action-oriented research leading to affordable methods that are controlled by women, to prevent HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases, including microbicides and vaccines, on strategies that empower women to protect themselves from sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, and on methods of care, support and treatment for women of various ages, promoting their involvement in all aspects of such research;

"*Also encourages* Governments to increase the provision of resources and facilities to women who find themselves having to provide care and/or economic support for those infected with HIV/AIDS or affected by the pandemic, and for the survivors, particularly children and older persons, utilizing funds earmarked for care and support to reduce women's disproportionate burden of care;"

(k) In operative paragraph 31, after the words "Urges Governments", the words "to combat stigmatization and" were deleted; and the words "as well as creating an enabling environment to combat stigmatization" were inserted at the end of the paragraph;

(l) Operative paragraph 33 was deleted;

(m) Three new operative paragraphs were inserted before operative paragraph 34, as follows:

"*Reaffirms* the need for Governments, supported by relevant actors, all stakeholders including civil society and the private sector, to intensify national efforts and international cooperation in the implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS;

"*Stresses* the importance of building up national competence and capacity to provide impact assessment of the epidemic which should be used in planning for prevention, treatment and care, and for addressing HIV/AIDS;

"*Urges* the international community to complement and supplement, through increased international development assistance, efforts of the developing countries that commit increased national funds to fighting the HIV/AIDS pandemic, especially to address the needs of women and girls, particularly those countries most affected by HIV/AIDS, particularly in Africa, especially sub-Saharan Africa, and the Caribbean, countries at high risk of expansion of the HIV/AIDS epidemic and countries in other affected regions whose resources for dealing with the epidemic are seriously limited,".

56. At the same meeting, Andorra, Angola, Australia, Austria, Belize, Belgium, Brazil, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Denmark, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Finland, France, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Liechtenstein, Mali, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Peru, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Senegal, Spain, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

57. At its 14th meeting, on 10 March, the Commission adopted the draft resolution on women, the girl child and HIV/AIDS, as orally revised (see chap. I, sect. D, resolution 50/2).

58. At the same meeting, after the adoption of the draft resolution, statements were made by the representatives of the United States of America and Canada (on behalf of Canada, New Zealand, Norway, Finland, Germany, Sweden, Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), and by the observers for the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and the Holy See.

Situation of women and girls in Afghanistan

59. At the 11th meeting, on 8 March, the observer for Austria, on behalf of Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Chile, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Turkmenistan and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Situation of women and girls in Afghanistan" (E/CN.6/2006/L.3).

60. At the same meeting the observer for Austria orally revised the text as follows:

(a) In operative paragraph 3, the word "Requests" was replaced by the word "Invites";

(b) In operative paragraph 4, the word "Also" before the word "requests" was deleted.

61. At the 13th meeting, on 10 March, the Commission was informed that the draft resolution contained no programme budget implications.

62. At the same meeting, the observer for Austria further revised operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution by replacing the word "Welcome" by the phrase "Takes note with appreciation of".

63. Also at the 13th meeting, Andorra, Angola, Australia, Canada, Iceland, Israel, Japan, Panama, Senegal, Serbia and Montenegro, Thailand, Ukraine and the United States of America joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

64. At its 13th meeting, on 10 March, the Commission adopted the draft resolution on the situation of women and girls in Afghanistan, as orally revised (see chap. I, sect. B, draft resolution I).

Situation of and assistance to Palestinian women

65. At the 11th meeting, on 8 March, the representative of South Africa, on behalf of States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China and Palestine, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Situation of and assistance to Palestinian women" (E/CN.6/2006/L.4).

66. At the 13th meeting, on 10 March, the Commission was advised that the draft resolution contained no programme budget implications.

67. At the same meeting, the representative of South Africa orally revised the eighth preambular paragraph of the draft resolution by replacing the words "and the report's goal of ending this inhumane Israeli practice" by the words " with a view to ending this Israeli practice,".

68. Also at the same meeting, statements were made by the representative of the United States of America and the observer for Israel.

69. At the 13th meeting, the Commission adopted the draft resolution on the situation of and assistance to Palestinian women, as orally revised, by a recorded vote of 41 to 2, with 1 abstention (see chap. I, sect. B, draft resolution II). The voting was as follows:*

In favour:

Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bolivia, Botswana, Burkina Faso, China, Congo, Cuba, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Gabon, Germany, Ghana, Guinea, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Japan, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Mauritius, Netherlands, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, South Africa, Sudan, Suriname, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania.

Against:

Canada, United States of America.

Abstain:

Nicaragua.

70. After the adoption of the draft resolution, statements in explanation of vote were made by the representatives of the United States of America and Canada.

71. A statement was also made by the observer for Palestine.

* The representative of Guatemala indicated that had her delegation been present at the time of the vote, it would have voted in favour of the draft resolution.

Advisability of the appointment of a special rapporteur on laws that discriminate against women

72. At the 13th meeting, on 10 March, the observer for Slovenia, also on behalf of Rwanda, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Advisability of the appointment of a special rapporteur on laws that discriminate against women" (E/CN.6/2006/L.5/Rev.1).

73. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of Canada, Cuba, the Russian Federation and South Africa, as well as by the observers for Austria (on behalf of the State Members of the United Nations that are members of the European Union), Slovenia and Rwanda.

74. At the 14th meeting, on 10 March, the observer for Slovenia orally revised the text as follows:

(a) In operative paragraph 1, the title "Commission on the Status of Women" was replaced by the title "Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women";

(b) In operative paragraph 2, the words "and observers" were inserted after the words "Member States".

75. At the same meeting, the Commission was advised that the revised draft resolution contained no programme implications.

76. Also at the 14th meeting, on 10 March, the Commission adopted the draft resolution on advisability of the appointment of a special rapporteur on laws that discriminate against women, as orally revised (see chap. I, sect. D, resolution 50/3).

77. After the adoption of the draft resolution, statements were made by the representatives of Cuba, the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Sudan.

Future organization and methods of work of the Commission on the Status of Women

78. At its resumed 14th meeting, on 16 March, Tom Woodroffe (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), Vice-Chairperson of the Commission, reported on the outcome of informal consultations held on the future organization and methods of work of the Commission.

79. At the same meeting, the Commission had before it a draft resolution, submitted by the Chairperson of the Commission, entitled "Future organization and methods of work of the Commission on the Status of Women" (E/CN.6/2006/L.8).

80. Also at the resumed 14th meeting, the Commission was informed that the draft resolution contained no programme budget implications.

81. At its resumed 14th meeting, on 16 March, the Commission adopted the draft resolution on future organization and methods of work of the Commission on the Status of Women (see chap. I, sect. B, draft resolution III).

Documents considered by the Commission on the Status of Women under agenda item 3

82. At its 14th meeting, on 10 March 2006, the Commission on the Status of Women decided to take note of a number of documents under agenda item 3 (see chap. I, sect. D, draft decision 50/101).

Chapter III

Communications concerning the status of women

1. The Commission considered item 4 of the agenda at its 12th meeting (closed), on 8 March 2006. It had before it a note by the Secretary-General transmitting the confidential list of communications concerning the status of women (E/CN.6/2006/SW/Communications List No. 40) and the report of the Working Group on Communications on the Status of Women (E/CN.6/2006/CRP.6).

Action taken by the Commission

Report of the Working Group on Communications on the Status of Women

2. At its 12th meeting (closed), on 8 March, the Commission considered the report of the Working Group on Communications on the Status of Women (E/CN.6/2006/CRP.6).

3. At the same meeting, the Commission took note of the report of the Working Group and agreed to include it in the report of the Commission. The report of the Working Group is as follows:

> 1. The Working Group on Communications on the Status of Women met in closed meetings before the fiftieth session of the Commission on the Status of Women in accordance with Economic and Social Council decision 2002/235. The Working Group was guided in its deliberations by the mandate given to it by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 76 (V), as amended by the Council in its resolutions 304 I (XI), 1983/27 and 1992/19, and bearing in mind Commission on the Status of Women decision 48/103, entitled "Future work of the Working Group on Communications".
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> 2. The Working Group considered the list of confidential communications and replies by Governments (E/CN.6/2006/SW/COMM.LIST/R.40 and Add.1). There was no list of non-confidential communications concerning the status of women since no such communications had been received by the Secretary-General.
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> 3. The Working Group considered the 18 confidential communications received directly by the Division for the Advancement of Women and the 11 confidential communications received by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) concerning the status of women. The Working Group noted that no confidential communications concerning the status of women had been received from other United Nations bodies or the specialized agencies.
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> 4. The Working Group noted that there were replies from Governments to 5 of the 18 communications received directly by the Division for the Advancement of Women, including a note stating that a full reply was pending, and replies to 10 of the 11 communications transmitted by OHCHR.
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> 5. The Working Group recalled its mandate, as defined in paragraph 4 of resolution 1983/27, which stated that the Working Group should perform the following functions:

(a) Consideration of all communications, including the replies of Governments thereon, if any, with a view to bringing to the attention of the Commission those communications, including the replies of Governments, which appeared to reveal a consistent pattern of reliably attested injustice and discriminatory practices against women;

(b) Preparation of a report, based on its analysis of the confidential and non-confidential communications, which would indicate the categories in which communications were most frequently submitted to the Commission.

6. The Working Group noted that a number of communications of a general nature had been submitted, as opposed to communications alleging specific cases of discrimination or injustice against individual women. It also noted that several communications had brought to light the issue of harmful traditional practices, including female genital mutilation, and their adverse effects on the sexual and reproductive health of women, including possible HIV/AIDS transmission.

7. The Working Group discerned the following categories in which communications had most frequently been submitted to the Commission:

(a) Abuse of power, arbitrary detention and inhumane treatment in detention and lack of due process;

(b) Sexual violence, including rape and gang rape, committed by law enforcement personnel, private individuals and military personnel, as well as the failure to provide adequate protection to victims, carry out thorough investigations and bring perpetrators to justice promptly;

(c) Legislation which discriminated against women in the areas of family, health, employment, social benefits, voting rights and the right to own and inherit property;

(d) Other forms of violence against women, including domestic violence and sexual harassment, forced and early marriage and harmful traditional practices, such as female genital mutilation, with a lack of due diligence by States adequately to investigate, prosecute and punish the perpetrators and/or a lack of specific legislation in those areas;

(e) Abduction of women and girls, particularly vulnerable groups such as internally displaced women, by parties in armed conflict, forcible confinement, harassment of women belonging to minorities, including sexual abuse and ill-treatment of young women and girls, and denial of access to justice;

(f) Torture and other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment, including of trafficked women;

(g) Differential application of punishments in law based on sex, including cruel, inhuman or degrading forms of punishment;

(h) The impact of armed conflicts, in particular on women and girls, with resulting heightened exposure to, inter alia, sexual violence, torture, abduction and arbitrary killing, and the failure of States to abide by international humanitarian law, as well as international human rights law, and

to protect and assist them, investigate their cases, prosecute and punish perpetrators adequately and provide redress and reparations;

(i) The threatening or pressuring of victims of violence by members of security forces in order to force retraction of complaints or to control and suppress potential opposition and violations of the rights to freedom of expression, association and movement.

8. During its consideration of all communications, including the replies of Governments thereon, and of whether any of those appeared to reveal a consistent pattern of reliably attested injustice and discriminatory practices against women, the Working Group was concerned about:

(a) Abuse of power by government officials in conducting arbitrary detention, torture and ill-treatment;

(b) Violence against women, especially sexual violence, and the apparent lack of commitment by some States to tackle impunity and thereby contribute to preventing violence against women;

(c) The failure by some States, in contravention of their human rights obligations, to exercise due diligence to prevent violence against women and adequately to investigate such crimes and punish perpetrators;

(d) The continued existence of legislation or practices in many areas either intended to or with the effect of discriminating against women, despite the international obligations and commitments of States and their constitutional provisions to outlaw such discrimination.

9. The Working Group expressed appreciation of the cooperation by those Governments that had submitted replies to or observations that clarified the communications received and it encouraged all others to do so in the future. The Working Group considered that cooperation essential for it to discharge its duties effectively. From the replies received, as well as those indicated by several authors of communications, the Working Group was encouraged to note that some Governments had or were in the process of adopting new legislation, amending discriminatory legislation, making efforts to harmonize national legislation with relevant international standards and removing gender bias in the area of administration of justice. The Working Group was also encouraged to note that, in some cases, Governments had or were in the process of bringing perpetrators to justice and/or providing remedies to the victims.

Chapter IV

Follow-up to Economic and Social Council resolutions and decisions

1. The Commission considered item 5 of the agenda at its 11th meeting, on 8 March 2006. It had before it a letter, dated 21 December 2005, from the President of the Economic and Social Council to the Chairperson of the Commission on the Status of Women (E/CN.6/2006/14), and a note by the Secretariat on creating an environment at the national and international levels conducive to generating full and productive employment and decent work for all, and its impact on sustainable development (E/CN.6/2006/CRP.4).

Action taken by the Commission

2. At its 11th meeting, on 8 March, the Commission authorized the Chairperson to draw the attention of the President of the Economic and Social Council to the above-mentioned note by the Secretariat (E/CN.6/2006/CRP.4) for the information of the Council's high-level segment in 2006.

Chapter V

Provisional agenda for the fifty-first session of the Commission

1. The Commission considered item 6 of the agenda at its resumed 14th meeting, on 16 March 2006. It had before it a note by the Secretariat containing the draft provisional agenda for the fifty-first session of the Commission (E/CN.6/2006/L.7).

2. At the same meeting, the Secretary orally revised the draft provisional agenda to include the titles of the following documents:

(a) Report of the Secretary-General on elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl-child (item 3 (a));

(b) Report of the Secretary-General on progress in mainstreaming a gender perspective in the development, implementation and evaluation of national policies and programmes, with a particular focus on the priority theme (item 3 (c)).

3. Also at the resumed 14th meeting, the Commission recommended the draft provisional agenda for its fifty-first session, as orally revised, for adoption by the Economic and Social Council (see chap. I, sect. C).

Chapter VI

Adoption of the report of the Commission on its fiftieth session

1. At its resumed 14th meeting, on 16 March 2006, the Rapporteur introduced the draft report of the Commission on its fiftieth session (E/CN.6/2006/L.6).

2. At the same meeting, the Commission adopted the draft report on its fiftieth session and entrusted the Rapporteur, in consultation with the Secretariat, with its completion.

Chapter VII
Organization of the session

A. Opening and duration of the session

1. The Commission on the Status of Women held its fiftieth session at United Nations Headquarters on 22 March 2005 and from 27 February to 10 and 16 March 2006. The Commission held 14 meetings (1st to 14th).

2. The session was opened by the Chairperson of the fiftieth session of the Commission, Carmen Maria Gallardo (El Salvador), who also made a statement.

3. At the 2nd meeting, on 27 February 2006, the Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations and the President of the Economic and Social Council addressed the Commission.

4. The Commission then viewed a video presentation highlighting the four world conferences on women.

5. At the same meeting, a statement was made by the Assistant Secretary-General and Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women.

B. Attendance

6. The session was attended by representatives of 45 States members of the Commission. Observers for other States Members of the United Nations, the Holy See and Palestine, representatives of organizations and other entities of the United Nations system and observers for intergovernmental, non-governmental and other organizations also attended. A list of participants is available in document E/CN.6/2006/INF.1.

C. Election of officers

7. In accordance with paragraph 2 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1987/21, the officers elected to the Bureau of the Commission should serve for a term of office of two years. The following officers were elected at the 1st meeting of the fiftieth session, on 22 March 2005:

Chairperson:

Carmen Maria Gallardo (El Salvador)

Vice-Chairpersons:

Szilvia Szabo (Hungary)
Adekunbi Abibat Sonaike (Nigeria)
Thomas Woodroffe (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)
Dicky Komar (Indonesia)

8. At its 2nd meeting, on 27 February 2006, the Commission appointed Dicky Komar (Indonesia) to serve as Vice-Chairperson-cum-Rapporteur for the fiftieth and fifty-first sessions.

D. Agenda and organization of work

9. At its 2nd meeting, on 27 February, the Commission adopted its provisional agenda and approved its organization of work as contained in document E/CN.6/2006/1. The agenda read as follows:

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.
3. Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century":
   (a) Review of gender mainstreaming in entities of the United Nations system;
   (b) Emerging issues, trends and new approaches to issues affecting the situation of women or equality between women and men;
   (c) Implementation of strategic objectives and action in critical areas of concern and further actions and initiatives:
      (i) Enhanced participation of women in development: an enabling environment for achieving gender equality and the advancement of women, taking into account, inter alia, the fields of education, health and work;
      (ii) Equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes at all levels.
4. Communications concerning the status of women.
5. Follow-up to Economic and Social Council resolutions and decisions.
6. Provisional agenda for the fifty-first session of the Commission.
7. Adoption of the report of the Commission on its fiftieth session.

E. Appointment of the members of the Working Group on Communications on the Status of Women

10. Pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 1983/27, the Commission established a Working Group to consider communications concerning the status of women. The following five members, nominated by their regional groups, were appointed to the Working Group on Communications of the Commission on the Status of Women at its fiftieth session:

Nadjeh Baaziz (Algeria)

Lara Romano (Croatia)*

Jorge Cumberbach Miguén (Cuba)*

Westmoreland Palon (Malaysia)

Heda Samson (Netherlands)

* Appointed by the Commission at its forty-ninth session.

11. At its resumed 14th meeting on 16 March 2006, the Commission appointed 3 members of the Working Group on Communications of the Commission on the Status of Women, which were nominated by their regional group, as follows:

Jiakun Guo (China)

Jennifer Feller (Mexico)

Janne Jokinen (Finland)

12. The Commission also decided that upon their nomination by their respective regional groups, candidates for membership on the Working Group on Communications would be permitted to participate fully in the work of the Working Group on Communications of the Commission on the Status of Women of the fifty-first session.

F. Documentation

The list of documents before the Commission at its fiftieth session is available at the following website address: http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/csw50/documents.htm.

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